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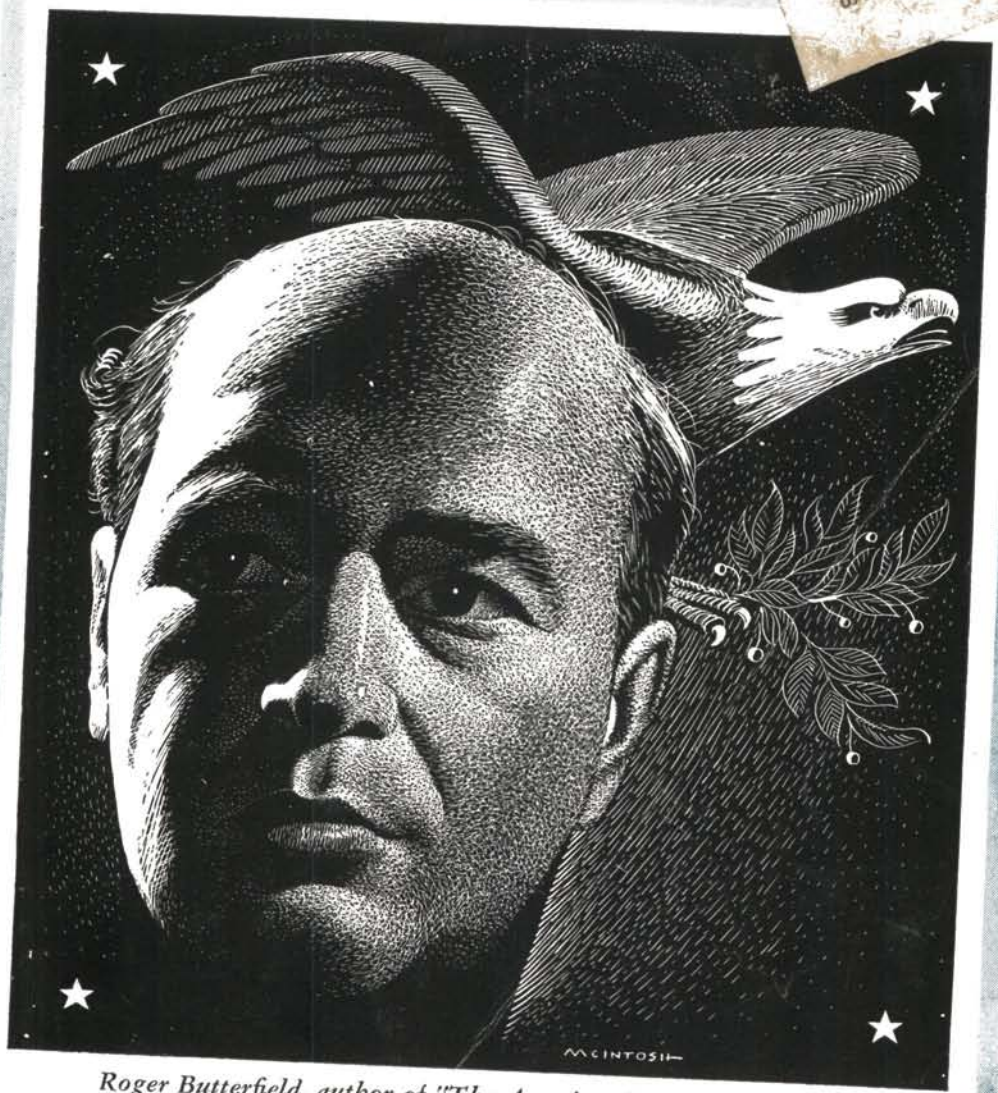

Roger Butterfield, author of "The American Past." *(See page 12)*

If We Really Want Peace . . .

HUMAN PRINCIPLES
By JOHN F. WHARTON

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TRADE Winds

NEW YORK, the wonder city, has the greatest skyline, the most beautiful harbor, the biggest banks, the flossiest movie palaces—and some of the worst public schools in the United States. Its fire and sanitation laws are enforced strictly everywhere—but in its own schools. In the midst of its tallest skyscrapers and its most restricted apartment houses stand schoolhouses that are dilapidated, ugly, and sub-tenement in standard. One-third of them were built before 1900. Twenty-one, in fact, were built before the Civil War! Here New York's children of 1947 huddle to receive a form of elementary education from inadequate and underpaid teachers, and mouldy, out-of-date textbooks that are falling apart at the seams.

I WAS GRADUATED from P. S. 10, Manhattan, in 1911. I loved it. So did such of my contemporaries as Richard Rodgers, Elmer Rice, Sidney Kingsley, Archie Mayo, Merryle Rukeyser, Ben Grauer, Ricardo Cortez, Michael Blankfort, and Howard Dietz. Our teachers were good, our school spirit ardent. The only fly in our ointment was a harmlessly demented little science instructor who used to prowl around his classroom on tiptoe, flip open a memorandum book, and bark something like, "Cerf, eh? There are three green checks against your name. That means I cannot conduct my class in quiet with your grinning face before me. Go to your prefect!" I would rush happily from the room to join the other exiles in a basketball game in the yard until the period was over.

Some of the kids in other New York public schools about that time or a few years later included Grover Whalen, Quent Reynolds, Max Schuster, Walter Hoving, and a spindly-legged youngster named Claudette Colbert. Many of them joined me later in swearing that no kids of ours ever would be exposed to the snobbery of a private school. "Public schools did a good enough job for me," I would boast, "and they'll do for my children, too." How I pooh-poohed friends who insisted I had not kept myself informed on the subject!

Now, however, I actually have a six-year-old boy of my own and the problem has become real for me. I did a little on-the-spot investigating—and I can only report that my friends were guilty of understatement. I say that no parent in his right mind who can afford a private school for his children today would enter them in any but a few of the existing public schools in New York. That's a fine state of affairs for the biggest city in America, isn't it? You do not have to look far to find out what's to blame: disgraceful public apathy and pitiful lack of funds.

IT HAS BEEN ESTIMATED that sixty million dollars would be required to bring New York schools up to the standard of such outstanding models as Minneapolis and Kansas City. With the city already heavily in debt, and plunging deeper every year, where is that money coming from? State politicians seem always to be looking the other way when it comes to helping anybody south of Spuyten Duyvil. Most of their widely-advertised surplus comes from the whopping taxes collected in the metropolitan area, but they do not consider that sufficient reason to grant an adequate appropriation to the educational system there. (The state legislature is predominantly Republican, the city Democratic.) To complete the sorry picture, city officials, protecting their own skins, won't raise the five-cent fare, which is rapidly exhausting the city's credit. Even the doughty La Guardia, champion of the underprivileged until the day of his death, found this too hot a potato to handle, although he privately admitted that a ten-cent fare was the only feasible solution to the problem. This year, for instance, it would turn a thirty-seven-million-dollar deficit from operation of the transit system into a twenty-three million-dollar surplus! People who cry that a doubled fare will soak the poor seem to forget that it is those very poor who are the real, if not the only, sufferers from inadequate public schools, hospitals, and subways and underpaid city employees.

In 1945, New York spent fifty-two cents per pupil for textbooks (Albany spent $1.81; Washington $1.40; Chicago $1.35). Its appropriation for audio-visual aids was a little over five cents *a year* per student. There was one motion-picture machine to every thirty-five schools. The all-day - neighborhood - school idea, so widely advocated by civic leaders, had been adopted by exactly four elementary schools in Greater New York. Its 39,000 teachers were averaging fifty-five dollars a week in salary—a twenty to thirty per cent increase since 1939. In the same period, living costs went up sixty to eighty per cent, farmers' income was up 155 per cent. A compositor in a New York printing plant today receives the same basic salary as a teacher who boasts sixteen continuous years of service.

WHEN THESE TEACHERS, on the crest of a wave of publicity, finally won an insufficient and long-overdue raise in pay last year, the necessary cash came from funds already earmarked for educational projects. In effect, the city fathers said, "All right, we

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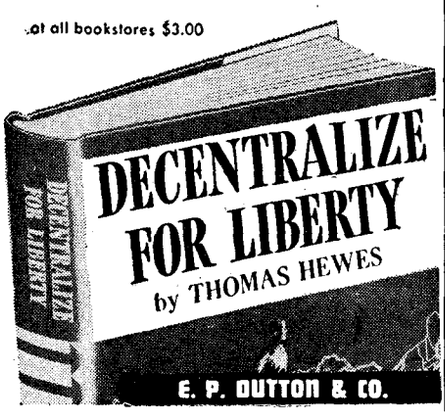

won't let the teachers actually starve —but then the children can't complain if they must keep on going to schools that haven't been remodeled for fifty years, and walk down four or five flights of stairs to go to a bathroom." I actually visited a school at the edge of one of the finest residential districts in Manhattan where one washroom on the ground floor served the entire building—one washroom without flush toilets, soap, or towels. From the front windows I could see gleaming in the morning sunlight the towers of some of the most exclusive apartment houses on Central Park West—but if there are any children from those apartment houses enrolled in the school, they must have been hiding in closets all the time I was there!

Good teachers need incentive and self-respect. Under our present system many have neither. Instead of asking themselves, "Am I teaching these children anything?" they approach their tasks on the basis, "Am I saving myself as much trouble as possible?" They consider themselves forgotten people; nothing in the appearance or manner of most of them inspires the pupils. Eager new recruits too often are beaten down to the hangdog, lacklustre average. In a majority of the classrooms I visited the teachers and pupils alike seemed interested only in doing as little studying as they had to until the dismissal bell released them all from bondage. To a publisher, the picture was particularly distressing. These children were at the age when they learned either to love books or to loathe them. If there was one single thing calculated to make the dirty old texts they were handling attractive to them, it escaped my attention. I felt like shouting, "For the love of heaven, let me send these kids some of our own new juvenile publications." Then I reflected that there were 804 separate schools in our town, and some 900,000 students—and like so many other well-intentioned but easily discouraged citizens before me, I said nothing at all.

POSSIBLY YOU are thinking, "That's just it. What can a *single* individual do to clean up a mess like this?" That's what sixteen society ladies said to themselves in the gaslight era of 1895. They gathered in the drawing room of Mrs. Van Rensselaer, adopted as their slogan "Our schools will be as good as parents *want* them to be," and formed an organization that grew slowly into the Public Education Association of today. The politicians resented their meddling at first—many of them still do—but these ladies were too important to be ignored. When their early reports proved that school children were having their eyesight damaged by poor lighting, that diseases were being spread by overcrowding in classrooms, that the children were developing curved spines from the seats, some mothers who didn't have such important names, but whose children were every bit as important in their own eyes, asked to join the movement. They are still joining today—although the PEA is still only about one-twentieth the size it should be. It isn't the cost—dues are only five dollars a year; it is the evident prevailing feeling that the problem isn't important enough. The only things that depend upon it, of course, are the molding of the next generation, and the kind of city New York is going to be twenty years from now.

The Public Education Association is fighting to keep the schools open for games and fun after three o'clock—to provide a place other than dangerous, overcrowded streets for New York kids to learn how to get along together. Four all-day neighborhood schools it organized—model schools in difficult areas—are now in active operation by the Board of Education. It is promoting more modern methods, varied trips designed to make native New Yorkers know at least as much about their own city as casual tourists—and fighting unceasingly for better facilities, better teachers, and an educational system that will be a credit to New York.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION about the Public Education Association, address your inquiry to Mrs. Sterling Rand, at the Willkie Memorial Building, 20 West 40th Street, New York 18. Residents of New York owe it to themselves to get into its campaign. *SRL* readers from other cities may want to compare the PEA program with what is being done in their own elementary schools. BENNETT CERF.

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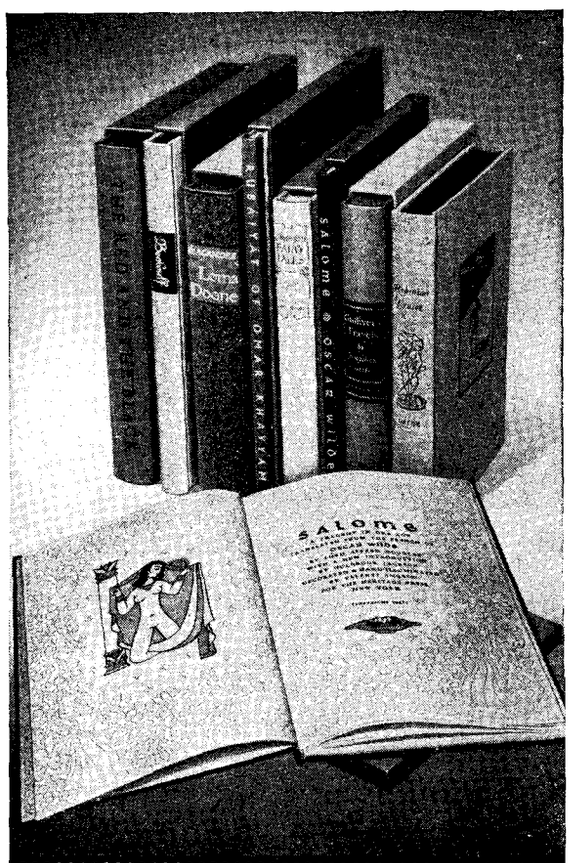

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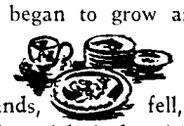
a clock The clock struck the quarter hour, Ruth said. For fifty years I have heard it strike four times an hour. Even in sleep, somewhere, I heard it, because when it was stopped I woke at night listening. The clock struck four times an hour, ninety-six times a day, for fifty years. After she died the clock stopped. Now it is going again. Now life is resuming. But not our old life. We are being scattered. We shall never come together again and make one.

a mirror All of us, Perry said, have lived in the mirror. It has held each of us a thousand times, framed in it like figures in a picture. It stood in the hall, across from a large, ugly Japanese vase, and the first thing I saw when I returned home was myself. The mirror lengthened the hall by its reflection and as I looked into it the house began to grow around me.

a set of dinner plates  The plate, Judith said, slipped out of Father's hands, fell, and broke on the floor. We all turned our heads and looked at Mother. The sharp chipped edges of the broken plate seemed to be reflected in her face. Its usual cool smoothness was cracked, veined over with little splits. The skin of her face looked drawn, dry, and chalky as the inside of a broken plate seen edgewise. Her hand on the table closed.

a rug I lay face down on the rug, Irene said. Above me Mother sat at the table with books and papers spread out before her. With my finger I traced the designs of the rug, the lines and zigzags and angles, and followed them till they ended up in some little figure, some odd-looking little person standing there with his hands on his hips, looking out from among the complicated and conventional patterns. You never realized with what strange and often beautiful things the rug was filled until you brought your face close to it and felt its surface against you.

a Dresden china figure Now it is hers, Perry said. Now she owns it. Isabel has raised her hand and the china shepherdess has fallen into it. She will take it home and place it on her mantel along with the glass from Venice, the silver from England, the china from France. She has bought it, as she has been able to buy everything she wanted, as in a sense she was able to buy me.

a pair of silver candlesticks I stared at the candles, Judith said. Around me there was a constant small movement, a picking up and laying down, a flashing of silver, a tinkle of forks on the edges of plates, a shimmer of wine in glasses, a flickering and weaving of hands. But I sat there and thought, what am I doing here? I said, I am no part of this. I fixed my eyes on the candles and stared at them till my eyes hurt. Mother's laughter suddenly brought the whole room unsteadily swimming back.

a desk Sitting at her desk, Irene said, Mother read over the letter she had just written. When she had finished it she looked up at me and said, "There! I have an idea that ought to have some effect." She straightened the papers on her desk, then leaned back and looked down at the box I was holding in my hand. "What's that you've got there, dear?" "A cricket," I said. "I'm raising it."

a picture of Paris The picture hung above Mother's chair, Ruth said. On the table at her side was a flat wicker basket filled with flowers. Irene glanced at me and said, "What are you making?" "An altar cloth." Mother said, "Ruth certainly has become an expert." I heard the fall of the years. I counted them and I looked beyond her at the picture above her head.

a chair The night before, Ruth said, Paul sat in the chair and his words came up to me. He set the words down like blocks, one next to the other, one on top of the other. I stood there watching them grow and after a time I saw the shape of our future built simply and without question there before me. "This is your life," he said. "And mine. Everybody's life is his own." "Yes," I said. "Tomorrow," he said and got up.

a piano I see the piano, Perry said. I see it but I do not hear the music that comes from it, that I used to draw out of it with my hands. "You'll always be able to play," Father said. "That's a great thing. No matter what you do . . . " He glanced at me diffidently as I sat at the piano. Then he cleared his throat and looked beyond me. "I never thought I was good enough . . . " I began. He turned his head quickly. "You could study . . . Of course if you're going to get married . . "

a vase We take things for granted, Isabel said. For years I saw the vase in the hall. In our house there was one just like it. It served no purpose. Its design was bad. It stood on a carved teakwood base, empty and often coated with a light film of dust. It was a household god. It was a corner-stone on which, discreetly but visibly, was engraved the substantial current bank balance of its owner. Now it stands under the scrutiny of amused eyes. Because I recognize how absurd it is I smile too. There would be no place for it in my perfect house.

a lamp The lamp stood by the chair, Perry said. As I came to the door I saw the cigarette smoke rising over the back of it. I wondered who was sitting in the chair. Then I went into the room and saw the light from the lamp shining warmly on the red-brown of Phyllis' hair.

AND TEN MEN AND WOMEN . . . The scene is an auction. The time, Friday at noon. Three sisters, their brother, and their brother's wife have gathered to watch parts of the house they grew up in — parts of themselves — sold to the highest bidder. As the objects come up for sale, the auction dissolves. We go back through the years to the House itself. There we meet the others: the man Ruth loved and sent away; the girl Perry wanted instead of Isabel; the husband who took Irene out of the house and into life; Father and Mother — particularly Mother. Their story is told by Benedict Thielen, with his innate sense of timing, in his polished and moving prose. FRIDAY AT NOON is fiction as we like to think of it in our minds and as we would like more of it to be.

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The Saturday Review of Literature

If We Really Want Peace...

I. Human Principles

By JOHN F. WHARTON

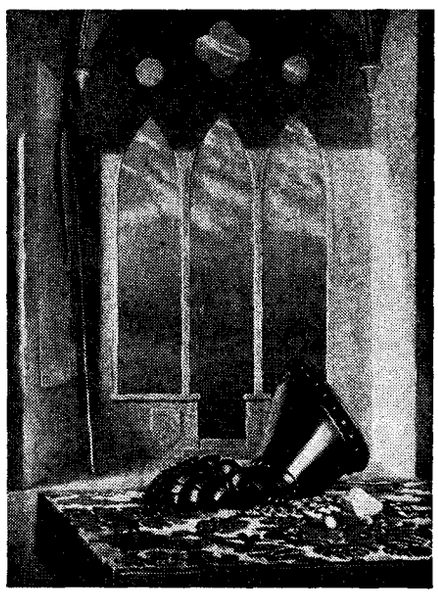
IF WE really want to eliminate war (and don't be too sure that all of us do), our best hope probably lies with small, scattered groups who are now without honor either in their own or other countries. They are the people who, with little financial or moral support, are endeavoring to conduct "pure research" into the nature of man. By "pure research" I mean seeking after fundamental *principles*, rather than tangible results. Some illustrations from the field of physics may make this clear.

Newton, Gibbs, and Einstein were primarily pure researchers. They gave to the world the principles of gravitation, transmutation of elements, conversion of mass to energy. They did not build steel skyscrapers, nor make cloth suits from wood, nor manufacture atomic bombs. Yet none of these marvels, which cause us to gape so readily, would have been possible without their work.

In the quest for peace, we are now trying to build world organizations, economic utopias, and perfectionist educational systems, with very few basic principles to guide us. We are like medieval physicians trying to prevent typhus epidemics before anyone had laid down the principles of the germ theory and demonstrated the effect of an impure water supply. We *may*, by great good luck, hit on the correct solution, but, if we do, it will be better luck than the human race has ever had before. For it is quite likely that in one major aspect, we are proceeding upon an erroneous fundamental principle.

Are We Rational?

If you will ask almost any group of friends how they think war might be eliminated, you will find that their thinking is dominated by one assumption for which there is no conclusive evidence. We assume that in the long run men's and women's actions are governed entirely by rational processes. Hence, it is believed that if you show men and women, by logical reasoning, that a certain action will benefit them, they will, of course, take that action.



"The Iron Glove," by Pierre Roy.

For centuries, Western man's theory of education has been dominated by this assumption. It might be summed up this way: man believes he has discovered certain immutable truths. These truths are, or should be, imparted by the older generation to the younger. When enough of them have been absorbed, people will reason logically from these truths and act accordingly.

Therefore, it is argued, if we could only educate people into seeing that the benefits of world government outweigh its disadvantages, they will accept it and live peacefully; or, if you can prove logically that some economic system is fair to all, people will adopt it and cease fighting.

I do not wish to disparage the use of reason, nor the attempts to establish world government or to cure all economic ills. World federation, without question, is at present our last best hope to keep the world whole at this moment, but even world government will eventually crack up

(*Continued on page* 35)

II. Political Techniques

By VERA MICHELES DEAN

IF THERE were a prize for the most nationally useful book-of-the-year, the 1947 prize should be awarded without a moment's hesitation to former Secretary of State Byrnes. Mr. Byrnes has served his country ably in an unusually varied range of capacities—legislative, executive, and judicial. But the greatest public service he has rendered is in "speaking frankly" about the important part he played in the international negotiations of two crucial post-war years. The deeply absorbing quality of his book* is due not so much to its literary distinction—although he writes with a simplicity and twinkling good humor which are rare in the writings of diplomats—as to the candor and intrinsic fairness with which he discusses events that are as yet hardly dry on the pages of history. Everyone with the slightest interest in the making of American foreign policy, and especially in the dominant problem of this country's relations with Russia, will search this book for clues to historic decisions of which there is as yet no official published record, and will find the search highly rewarding. For practically every page is rich in nuggets of valuable information and comment.

Mr. Byrnes makes no pretense of being either a professional writer or a professional diplomat. He was summoned away from civilian wartime tasks to accompany President Roosevelt on his journey to Yalta in February 1945, which was to prove his last. He therefore participated in the initial Big Three conversations about the bases of peace of Europe and Asia, which he subsequently had to translate into concrete peace settlements when he became Secretary of State after the San Francisco Conference in the summer of 1945. It is clear from Mr. Byrnes's account that

**SPEAKING FRANKLY. By James F. Byrnes. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 324 pp. $3.50.*

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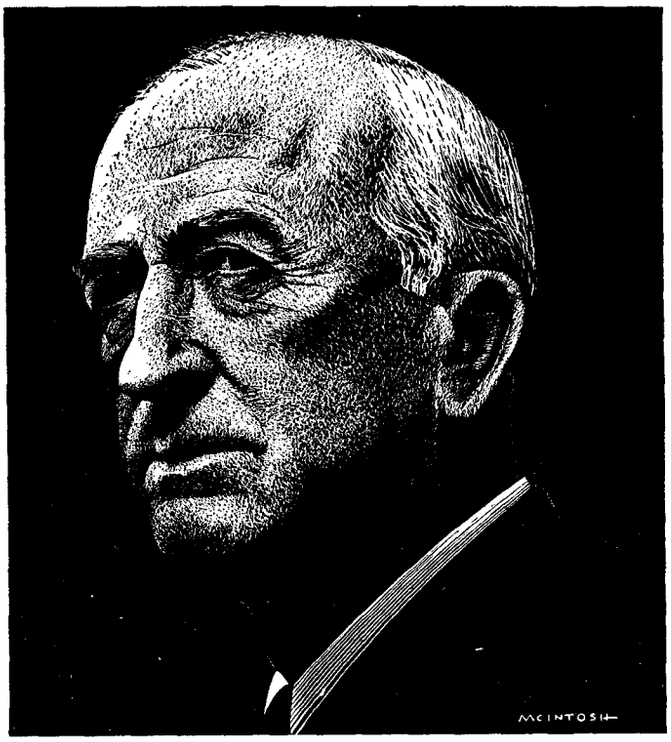
the President "had made little preparation for the Yalta Conference," for which he departed almost immediately after his inauguration for the third term. Not until the day before the Presidential party landed at Malta did Mr. Byrnes learn that there was "on board a very complete file of studies and recommendations prepared by the State Department," and he adds:

> Later, when I saw some of these splendid studies, I greatly regretted they had not been considered on board ship. I am sure the failure to study them while en route was due to the President's illness. And I am sure that only President Roosevelt, with his intimate knowledge of the problems, could have handled the situation so well with so little preparation.



"The lessons James F. Byrnes so honestly shares with his fellow citizens should bear rich fruit."

This statement sheds a great deal of light on some of the fundamental problems of American foreign policy in the post-war years. As the war drew to a close, the United States was emerging in a role it had never before been called upon to play—the role of the greatest power in the world, with only one other great power, Russia, left to dispute the field. This new role called for the most thoughtful and most thoroughly informed consideration of the objectives the United States intended to pursue in world affairs, the methods it would use to achieve these objectives, and the principles it would regard as essential for the building of lasting peace. Yet in the midst of the turmoil of two wars, in Europe and Asia, neither of which was yet in sight of victory in February 1945, President Roosevelt, valiantly fighting to maintain his declining health, was under such great pressure of domestic affairs and military necessities that he was unable, no matter how much he might have wanted to do so, to undertake an overall survey of the course the United States might follow in the post-war world. Moreover, some of his most intimate advisers—notably Harry Hopkins, who was gravely ill at Yalta, and Mr. Byrnes himself — had none of the training and little of the background information required for this task.

True, as Mr. Byrnes points out, they had at their disposal "splendid studies" prepared by the experts of the Department of State. But the advice of experts—as is all too well known to those familiar with the conduct of foreign relations in Washington—frequently proves to be a voice in the wilderness. Instead, decisions of the most far-reaching character, profoundly affecting the fate of other nations as well as our own, are too often the result of improvisation, of sudden little considered choices between baffling alternatives. Sometimes, owing to the dichotomy of the American Government, where the Executive makes decisions on foreign policy but Congress shares in their implementation, improvisation is due to the necessity, real or imagined, of placating the voters, irrespective of what may seem advisable to State Department experts. But on other occasions even the plea of political necessity appears to be non-existent; and policies are formulated in what seems, to the layman at least, as a hasty attempt to make piecemeal adjustments without reference to an overall framework of traditional foreign policy, such as other great powers — notably Britain and Russia— have developed over the centuries.

Mr. Byrnes's book could be used as a fascinating, and often frightening, textbook of the pitfalls of conducting the foreign policy of a great and influential nation in a haphazard way. Three examples can be chosen from the wealth of material spread before the reader: the veto, China, and Germany. At Yalta Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin had a very revealing discussion about the problem of the veto to be exercised by the great powers in the proposed UN Security Council—a problem which has since plagued the UN. Mr. Byrnes's stenographic record of the three-way conversation on this point reveals Stalin's profound concern about the need for continued agreement between the United States, Britain, and Russia.

> I think [Mr. Byrnes quotes him as saying] that the task is to secure our unity in the future, and, for this purpose, we must agree upon such a covenant as would best serve that purpose. The danger in the future is the possibility of conflicts among ourselves. If there be unity, then the danger from Germany will not be great. . . . We are accused of attaching too great importance to the procedure "how to vote." We are guilty. We attach great importance to the question of voting. All questions are decided by votes and we are interested in the decisions and not in the discussions.

It was, therefore, clear then, as it is now, that Russia's preoccupation with the veto was due primarily to its realization that, lacking the veto, it would be in constant danger of being outvoted, since it could count on only a minority either in the Security Council or the General Assembly. This was the reason, too, for Stalin's insistence that the Ukraine and Byelorussia which, obviously, are not independent nations, should each be accorded a vote in the UN, thus increasing the number of votes on which Russia might count. Stalin's request came as a shock to the American representatives, and it was Mr. Eden, "who wanted to be certain of the admission of all members of the British Commonwealth including India, which was not an independent state," who first agreed on accepting the proposal. When President Roosevelt, at the end of the Yalta conference on February 10, in a letter to Stalin, raised the question of "additional votes in the Assembly in order to give parity to the United States," Stalin promptly answered: "The number of votes for the USA might be increased to three as in the case of the Soviet Union and its two basic republics. If it is necessary I am prepared officially to support this proposal." Churchill, too, expressed his acquiescence. The President, however, in a message sent by Hopkins to Byrnes, who had meanwhile returned to Washington, said he was "extremely anxious no aspect of this question be discussed even privately"

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—a request with which Mr. Byrnes goes on, however:

> The President and his advisers concluded not to ask at San Francisco for compliance with the agreement that we have as many votes as were given to Russia. He did not again discuss the subject with me, and I did not know he had changed his mind. I admit that the public opposition to Russia's three votes as against our one was not so great as I had expected. But nevertheless I think we should have insisted at San Francisco on the agreement made at Yalta.

One can only wonder whether knowledge of how this matter arose at Yalta, and how it was handled there by representatives of the United States, might not have altered some of the judgments subsequently pronounced by American commentators on Russia's intransigence about the veto and on its request for two additional votes in the General Assembly.

The second illustration that can be drawn from Mr. Byrnes's book is President Roosevelt's decision at Yalta to support the demands Stalin proposed to make on China in advance of Russia's entrance into the war against Japan. This decision has received remarkably little discussion in this country. The United States, on this occasion, took a step which jeopardized the independence and territorial integrity of China, which had been traditional postulates of our policy toward that country, without consulting or even notifying the government of Chiang Kai-shek, one of our principal allies in the Far Eastern war. This action is at least as open to criticism on grounds of "unilateralism" and infringement of the rights of independent nations as any of the measures taken by Russia in Eastern Europe which have been vigorously denounced in the United States. It is therefore startling to find that, with a very few exceptions, American opinion has been silent on this matter. What happened, according to Mr. Byrnes, was that on the last afternoon of the Yalta Conference, Stalin requested President Roosevelt to remain one more day, stating that "he wished to discuss some matter he deemed important." That day the agreement regarding cession to Russia of the Kurile Islands was reached in private conversations among the Big Three instead of at the conference table.

> When the President returned [Mr. Byrnes goes on,] he did not mention it to me and the protocol [on the Kurile Islands] was kept locked in his safe at the White House. In the early summer I learned that President Roosevelt had undertaken to induce China to make the concessions affecting Port Arthur, Dairen, and the railroad [in Manchuria], but it was not until some time after I became Secretary of State that a news story from Moscow caused me to inquire and learn of the full agreement.

It is, of course, true, as Mr. Byrnes points out, that the President's decision was primarily a military decision, determined by his belief that war with Japan could not be ended without invasion, and by the estimate "of what such an invasion would cost us in human lives with Russia in the war and what the cost would be if Russia were out of the war." Nevertheless, and making full allowance for the fact that, as Mr. Byrnes puts it, "Mr. Stalin is not bashful about making demands," the historian must ask whether so important a decision should not have received fuller consideration, and whether a greater attempt might not have been made to relate this decision to our avowed policy toward China.

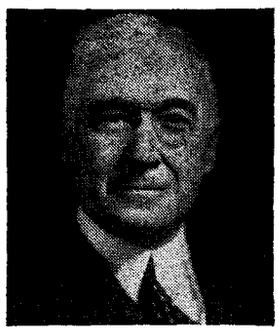
The third illustration is that of the pros and cons of American policy on Germany. Mr. Byrnes sharply criticizes Molotov's statement of Russian policy on Germany in the Council of Foreign Ministers on July 10, 1946, when the Russian Foreign Minister denounced all suggestions that Germany should be transformed into a primarily agrarian state. This speech, as Mr. Byrnes points out, was intended to draw the German people away from the United States, whose policy had originally been identified with the Morgenthau plan. With the candor which makes his book so valuable Mr. Byrnes says:

> I had to admit the effectiveness of the effort [by Molotov] because there *had* been confusion in our own country on the policy of the United States toward Germany. The truth is, there had even been much confusion in the Cabinet on the subject.

He then describes in detail the conflict between Secretary of State Hull and Secretary of War Stimson, on the one hand, and Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau on the other—a conflict in which Morgenthau won out at the Quebec Conference. When Mr. Stimson, after the conference, repeated his views to President Roosevelt, the President said "he had no intention of turning Germany into an agrarian state." Mr. Stimson thereupon "expressed the hope that the President would not approve a peace of vengeance." Mr. Byrnes goes on: "The President agreed with Mr.

(*Continued on page* 34)

Bernard M. Baruch Reports on "Speaking Frankly"



WITH a full use of his shorthand notes and a necessarily frank use of "I," Mr. Byrnes has redeemed his promise to give the public a front-seat view of the Herculean task of effecting peace at his conferences. One does not have to agree with his outlook and conclusions to realize that what he has written provides information and background for an understanding of the problems that confronted him and that now confront us all.

Mr. Byrnes wisely recommends a policy of firmness and patience in dealing with peoples who have been scorched and grievously wounded physically, politically, and spiritually. Some of them suddenly find themselves in possession of power which we hope they will soon learn to use instead of abuse, thus bringing nearer man's everlasting quest for peace and security.

One cannot help wishing that Mr. Byrnes will have the time and inclination to give the public a front-seat view, as well, of the activities which saw him leave the Senate to become a Justice of the Supreme Court and then, successively, Director of the Office of Economic Stabilization, Director of the Office of War Mobilization, and Secretary of State—all of this in addition to the contests for the Vice Presidency in 1940 and 1944. One hopes, too, that Mr. Byrnes will discuss the difficulties involved in making and arriving at an American policy for atomic energy—fought by some members of the State Department despite the full approval and unwavering support of the President and Mr. Byrnes himself.

The reader who starts this book will not put it down until he has gone from cover to cover. It is full of such homely observations as, "The nearest approach to immortality on earth is a Government bureau." That particular remark is worthy of Benjamin Franklin.

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Americana.

In reviewing Butterfield's "The American Past" below, Lloyd Morris modestly omits any mention of his own "Postscript to Yesterday" (reviewed in SRL *Oct. 18) which with the magnificent Butterfield volume leads the significant group of recent American social histories by non-academic writers discussed by him in his review. Popular in the best sense, some of these books, like Morris's study and William Harlan Hale's "The March of Freedom," use lucid, simple prose to focus the attention of the reading public upon the urgent meaning of the American liberal tradition in our history. Others, like Allen's "I Remember Distinctly," or those picture histories, DeVoto's "Across the Wide Missouri" and Jackson's "Picture Maker of the Old West," exploit the visual impact of pictures along with their text for the same purpose.*

History As a Weapon

THE AMERICAN PAST: A History of the United States from Concord to Hiroshima. By Roger Butterfield. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1947. 476 *pp.* $10.

Reviewed by LLOYD MORRIS

THIS handsome volume is the product of an original conception that has been admirably realized. But although it makes an innovation by applying the method of pictorial narrative to history, it is in other respects closely allied to some recent books that deal with portions of the national saga. Mr. Butterfield comes to the writing of history from the National Affairs editorship of *Life;* the other writers resemble him in not being academic specialists. Their common preoccupation with the American past has its source, I believe, in a common anxiety about the American future. Their incentive is the crisis which civilization may not survive. Keenly aware that hope for its solution lies chiefly with this country, they recognize how gravely the hope is imperiled by a prevailing mood of disenchantment, by confusion of purpose, by inertia. In these circumstances, they are using history as a weapon against the threat from within—as a means of clarifying our minds and hearts, of revitalizing the American spirit.

It is precisely this effect that Mr. Butterfield achieves with "The American Past." He has reproduced nearly one thousand photographs, portraits, prints, and cartoons; to these, he has linked over one hundred thousand words of crisp, vigorous commentary. Together, they form a dramatic narrative in which pictorial eloquence is balanced by verbal intellectual challenge. For in its illustrations and in its text the book is almost continuously provocative. As Mr. Butterfield unfolds the story of the American experiment during one hundred and seventy years, the reader is compelled to take account of the principles and the practices by which it has been shaped. More importantly, he is made to perceive their divergence and to appraise the measure of failure entailed by their disparity. This specific enlightenment appears to be Mr. Butterfield's major objective—as it is that of other recent, non-academic historians—and its cash-value in our present crisis is obvious. With it, we may be able to harmonize our principles and practice, reorient our social order toward our traditional aspirations, and restore the credit of democracy in a world where it is widely held in disrepute. Without it, we can scarcely avoid perpetuating the old mistakes, or making new ones from the old sordid motives which we decline to acknowledge but have been unwilling to reject.

Mr. Butterfield has written his book as a history of American politics, but he assigns to the word a more inclusive meaning than its usual one. Politics, he says, is history in action; it "includes everything that importantly influences the fate or mood of the nation at any particular time." So comprehensive a definition imposes a program equally comprehensive, and Mr. Butterfield has succeeded notably in carrying it out. Almost every important influence on the nation's life is at least adequately represented; almost none has been totally ignored. Since the narrative begins with "the boundless idealism of the Declaration of Independence" and only concludes with "the seemingly boundless destructive power of the atom bomb," the massive diversity of its contents is quite as remarkable as their con-

THE AUTHOR: Twenty years or more ago the University of Rochester faculty was in an advanced nettle over Editor Roger Butterfield of *The Campus* because of a forthright but somewhat undiplomatic article he wrote. Flying to his defense, a graduate Jeremiah (now president of the largest local bank) warned authorities that if expulsion were effected embarrassment would dog the school throughout Mr. Butterfield's career, which he confidently prophesied would be brilliant. The culprit was forgiven—to Rochester's continuing relief. Mr. Butterfield went on to the Columbia School of Journalism, then joined the Philadelphia *Bulletin,* his first full-time newspaper job, in 1928. He worked in the same city for the *Evening Public Ledger,* corresponding off and on for *Time* magazine and affiliated Luce publications until 1937, when he was made roving national reporter for *Time* and *Life.* He profiled everybody from Van Johnson to Cardinal Spellman, including Senator Taft, Paul V. McNutt, James Farley, Wendell Willkie, and Roosevelt—everything from juvenile delinquency to Harold's (gambling) Club in Reno. Somewhere between were his famous "Report from the Nation" and "The Hulls of Tennessee," which won him promotion to National Affairs editor, in 1941. Since 1945 he's free-lanced. A series of articles by Dr. and Mrs. Beard he edited for *Life* inspired "The American Past," a subject on which he's admittedly "fanatic." For it, he spent two years in research, two writing. He expects to indulge his enthusiasm for the West writing about it in an eight-room Victorian miner's house in Virginia City, Nev., he and Mrs. Butterfield, a former *Life* researcher, are renovating. Two weeks ago he was in Kansas City, Mo., doing a story on a mule auctioneer. Another about Sam Goldwyn will appear in *Life* shortly. He was born in Lyndonville, N. Y.; is as fond of cats as James Mason. In 1940 and 1944 he covered the major political campaigns, now refuses to guess Republican plans for '48. "I'm no oracle," says Mr. Butterfield.

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sistent organization in a single factual theme.

The factual theme is set by the persistence, in American life, of two dominant impulses. Mr. Butterfield describes them as "the desire to see all men free and equal, and the desire to be richer and stronger than anyone else." Americans, he believes, have always wanted liberty first of all, though some have always conceived it in terms of an untrammeled opportunity to acquire wealth and power by whatever means possible, and at whatever cost to society as a whole. The countervailing forces of conscience and cupidity have generated most of the drama in American history, and Mr. Butterfield both shows and tells how this has come about. In one or another guise the basic conflict of Hamilton and Jefferson has never ceased; the primacy of human rights over property rights has never been securely established; and whether government shall function mainly in behalf of the wealthy and powerful, or advance the welfare of the common man, remains an issue which Americans attempt to decide every four years.

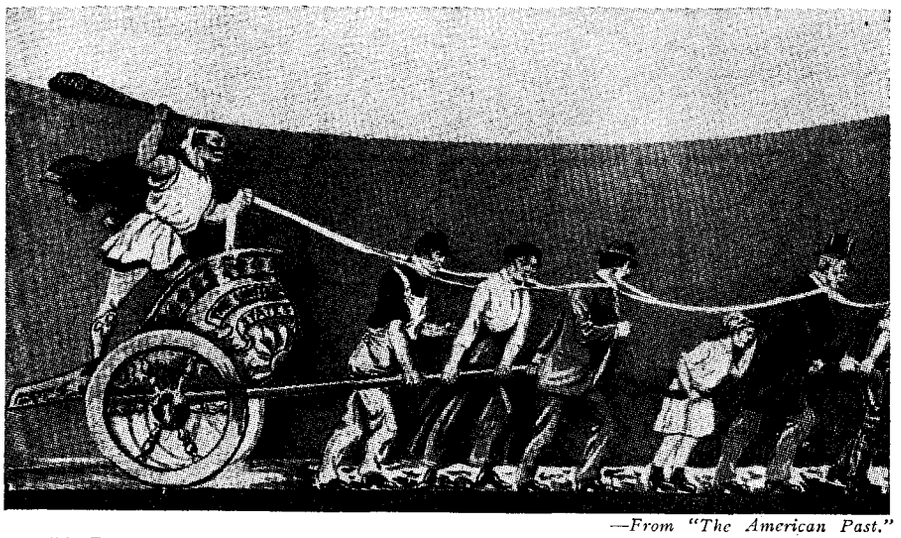
Later episodes of this epic conflict are highlighted by Mr. Butterfield in contrasts that are likely to disturb a reader's complacency: the "billion dollar country" of the 1890's, in which eleven million of the nation's twelve million families were living on less than four hundred dollars a year; the Supreme Court declaring an income tax unconstitutional, wealth having denounced it as a "communist march on private property"; the Great Depression, when, rugged individualism turned ragged, citizens sold apples in the street, a billionaire Secretary of the Treasury advocated more wage cuts and less work, but dividend and interest payments rose to an all-time high of eight billion dollars; the march of veterans on Washington, finally dispersed by the Army with tanks, tear-gas, and torches while President Hoover thanked God that we still had a government "that knows how to deal with a mob"; the yardstick of the TVA which enables Americans to measure, among other things, "one hundred years of rugged individualism—during which the Tennessee River had run away to waste and destruction—against a decade of intelligent public planning."

That Mr. Butterfield has not spared us the record of our failures indicates the essential patriotism of his purpose and his attitude. It reminds us that Americans, since the beginning of their history as a nation, have always been aggrieved by the discrepancy between what is and what ought to be; that American culture, seldom

"'Southern Chivalry' at top shows Congressman Preston Brooks trying to kill Senator Sumner. Democratic Senators are laughing."

"The most popular Republican cartoon was 'Little Billy Bryan Chasing Butterflies'," a "cabinet photograph" takeoff.

"The Boy on the Burning Deck" shows Bryan sticking to the silver platform, whence many Democrats had fled.



—From "The American Past."

"A Democratic campaign display shows Teddy as an American Nero, with various classes of citizens hitched to his Big Stick chariot. Like every strong President, Roosevelt was frequently accused of having a Caesar complex."

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surrendering its assumption that men can transform their experience and environment to accord with their desire, remains unique in affirming the ultimate reality of ideals and the relative nature of the actual. Mr. Butterfield's point of view is that of genuine liberalism, which today is at a discount in a world increasingly solicited by authoritarian systems and deterministic philosophies. Impatience with it is by no means unknown in this country—especially on the part of those who should be rallying to its defense: the champions of a free-enterprise system of which it is the intellectual corollary. For liberalism merely extends to programs for social action the competitive opportunity of a free market, achieving its solutions by means of debate and compromise. It is the normal American attitude, imposed by our organic law, protected by our political institutions, and nourished by our spiritual tradition. As if to drive this point home, Mr. Butterfield closes his history with a memorable statement of liberal doctrine:

> Today we are faced with the preeminent fact that, if civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships—the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together and work together in the same world, at peace.

These were the last written words of Franklin Delano Roosevelt; they distill the moral effect of Mr. Butterfield's excellent book.

Vintage Teakettles

MIXED TRAIN DAILY. By Lucius Beebe. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1947. 367 pp. $12.50.

Reviewed by
EVERETTE L. DE GOLYER, JR.

THE LEGION of railroad fiends in America is a strange and unpredictable tribe. Dearest of all to their hearts are not such roads as the New York Central, Pennsylvania, Frisco, and Santa Fe, with the never-ending blat of airhorns piercing the dusk and the ceaseless pounding of tonnage freights, but the insignificant, rural, short-line railroads with their vintage teakettles wobbling uncertainly down their few miles of rickety track, towing a few freight cars and a faded combination coach of positive antiquity.

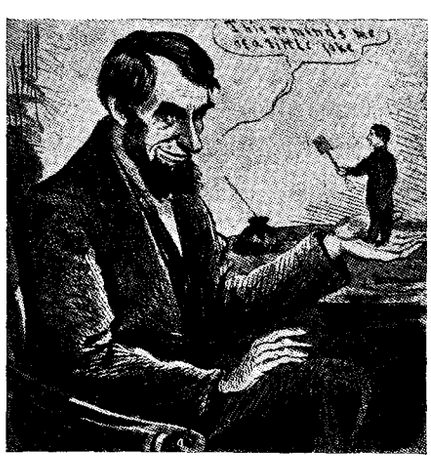
For this clan especially, as well as the enthusiasts of the old West and pastoral Americana generally, Lucius Beebe has produced his best book. "Mixed Train Daily" is an excellent account of this fast-vanishing species of American railroads. He and his associate, C. M. Clegg, Jr., have sought out most of the remaining short lines of the United States and carefully recorded for posterity their trains, their operations, and their backgrounds.

The principal strength of this book is the photographs, of which there are about 300 and a half dozen color plates. Mostly by Clegg, they are superlative, illustrating as they do backgrounds which suggest the type of territory which each road serves and the numerous little details which make the American short line so especially interesting. Particularly in the chapters pertaining to the silver roads of Colorado and Nevada, there are a number of excellent views of events of frontier days, which, although they do not concern railroads in particular, add a great deal to the story. The photographic portion of the book rates as far the best of any of Beebe's railroad works, which now number five.

The text is likewise extremely good. Part historical and part narrative, it catches the spirit and speech of the backwoods regions. The style, of course, is in Mr. Beebe's recondite and florid manner, but is heightened by a gentle irony which has been absent from most of his previous books. And he lets the characters, general managers, locomotive engineers, conductors, station agents, and brakemen tell the stories of their little roads in their own dialect.

The only criticism of this book is that it neglects some of the lesser known short lines in favor of the better known ones. The Virginia and Truckee and the "Tweetsie" in particular have been well chronicled before. Why not more about the amazing narrow-gauge lines of the National Railways of Mexico, which are greater in extent and use more spectacular motive power than any American narrow gauge? Where are photographs of the Roscoe Snyder and Pacific, the Osage, and the Morristown and Erie?

"Mixed Train Daily" is the railroad book of the year and the book of all time as far as short lines are concerned. It is doubtful if as much care and as much travel have been lavished on a book of this sort before.



—From "The American Past."

"Lincoln, a confident giant, McClellan a political pygmy. The spade in Little Mac's hand refers to the charge that his army dug more than it fought."

The Lincoln Image

PORTRAIT FOR POSTERITY. LINCOLN AND HIS BIOGRAPHERS. By Benjamin P. Thomas. Illustrations by Romaine Proctor. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 1947. 329 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

READING a life of Burke, Lincoln disgustedly threw it aside with the remark that it was as warped as all other biographies. He could little have thought what a struggle would be required to rescue his own career and personality from the myth-makers, and deliver it to men who combined insight and scholarship with a passion for veracity. That struggle is not yet ended, though the main features of a truthful portrait have emerged.

It is (as Paul M. Angle's recent anthology reminds us) a composite portrait; many hands went into its making. This well-composed book tells in very human terms the story of the battle of different groups to establish their own conception of Lincoln: first the adulatory school of campaign biographers; then the reminiscent school; next the "official" biographers, the early realists, and the scholars; and, finally, the interpreters. Over three-quarters of a century a developing image came into existence. If anyone thinks that the slow biographical process lacked drama, heat, pathos, and humor, he needs only look into these diverting pages.

If three gifted men, Herndon, Nicolay, and Hay, had only possessed a few more qualities, the true image of Lincoln would have emerged long before it did. They all knew Lincoln well, they were all by their lights honest, they all had access to excellent sources of information. Herndon possessed a Boswellian instinct for painting his old partner as he had stood, wart and all. Unfortunately, he lacked literary talent, he showed a shocking gullibility in some matters along with a

(*Continued on page* 39)

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The World.

Foreign reporting by the usual correspondents and professional travelers is varied now and then by the impressions of a literary craftsman. Such books reflect the virtues and the faults of the artist. They are apt to be biased, or highly colored; but the prose nevertheless is strong, the ideas stimulating, the detail recorded with the skill of a seasoned writer. "Europe Without Baedeker," by the critic Edmund Wilson, and poet Payne's "China Awake," are unusual and fresh studies by two such artists. . . . First-hand reports of any kind on Russia are difficult to come by these days, with so few foreigners allowed in the country. And those we have are apt to be tendentious. We welcome therefore a book which reveals the Russian mentality as well as does "I Want to Be Like Stalin" which is reviewed here this week.

With Bravos and Boos

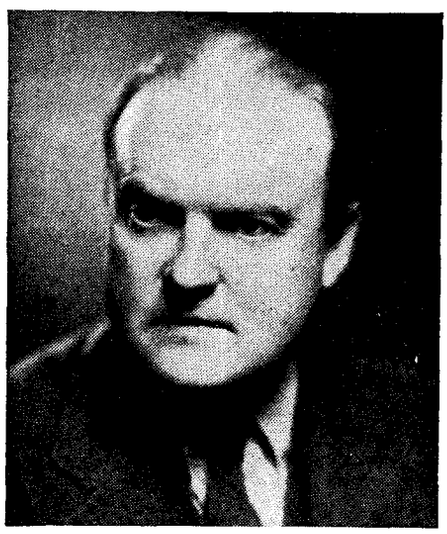
EUROPE WITHOUT BAEDEKER. By Edmund Wilson. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 427 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by EDGAR MOWRER

THIS is a report on Europe by a cultured and highly prejudiced American who knew a great deal about Europe's books and culture—and next to nothing about Europe's people, to say nothing of Europe's sociology and politics. Quite naturally, what he writes about Europe's books, history, literary personalities (Malraux, Silone, Santayana, etc.) is of the highest interest. What he insists on chronicling about Europe's people and politics (quite a lot) is either prejudiced, it seems to me, almost to the point of distortion, or trivial. Add the apparently inevitable delay in publishing, toward the end of 1947, an account of a reporter's trip in 1945, and the fact that the world is changing almost from week to week, and you reach the conclusion that this book will not rank among Edmund Wilson's major efforts. (In justice to him, it should be stated that it is essentially unpretentious.)

Had Mr. Wilson concentrated upon those cultural aspects of life he is so much at home among, the results might have been splendid. (Though why must he commit such outrages against the Italian language?) Unhappily, he went to Europe as the correspondent of *The New Yorker* magazine. *The New Yorker* correspondents specialize in a "false modest" type of reporting that avoids talking about events and people of obvious importance and concentrates upon the "simple," the day-to-day, and the "typical." Where such stuff is significant, the method becomes highly successful. Where it lacks significance, it becomes tedious. Much of Mr. Wilson's very wordy contacts with "simple people," whether with the dull prostitutes of London and Naples or the attractive Eleni in Athens, are not significant nor, to me, adequately interesting in themselves.

What really astonished me was the revelation of the cultured Edmund Wilson as essentially a provincial. Predominant among his characteristic attitudes is a rabid Anglophobia. This is not the result of an intellectual blind spot. In his very original last chapter, "Homecoming—Final Reflections," Mr. Wilson concedes that "the British system has . . . preserved certain ideals of devotion to the state and of disinterested intellectual activity that during the latter part of the nineteenth century were pretty well obliterated in the United States." (We never possessed them to an equal degree.) The British "class system," despite its grotesque inadequacies, actually managed to imbue a whole people with the aristocratic virtues,



"Edmund Wilson's literary judgment remains sensitive."

—courage, good manners, and noblesse oblige.

It is precisely the British manners that Mr. Wilson, in common with about ninety per cent of all untraveled Americans who cooperated with Britishers during the war, could not stand. He felt these islanders were perpetually patronizing him, that they enjoyed "taking down" their inferiors in a consciously cruel manner, and that their (agreeably) subdued voices and habitual understatement were actually a mask for a ferocious devotion to private possession. During his travels in Britain, Italy, and Greece (despite the book's ambitious title, he hardly mentions the other parts of Europe), Mr. Wilson hardly met a British subject of whom he could approve. In fact, as a vehicle for his antipathy and for his (probably incorrect) thesis that Americans in Europe were somehow more sympathetic to the common peoples of Europe than their British equivalents, he goes out of his way to invent a whole chapter (acknowledged as fiction): "Through the Abruzzi with Mattie and Harriet."

Mr. Wilson seems to forget that, to the British, the Italians are not just an unwarlike, big-mouthed people, who, despite their adherence to the Axis remain somehow likable and worthy. To the much-tried British they remain the originators of fascism, the most repulsive doctrine of modern times. The Italians gave themselves with alacrity to a pop-eyed ham who promised them an empire made of other people's property, who did as much as the Germans to upset the European order, and who contemptibly stabbed their French neighbor in the back at the moment they thought that France was out and Britain doomed. If Mr. Wilson had kept these little details in mind, he might have had less difficulty in understanding the attitude of individual Britishers toward Italy and the Italians.

But this is asking a good deal of an essentially literary man who, in the year 1945, still traces the rise of Hitler and the murder in gas ovens of five million Jews to "the continued degradation of Germany imposed by the Treaty of Versailles." This degradation" is a legend invented by Germans to dupe innocent foreigners like Mr. Wilson.

Unfortunately, as a Marxist, even as a Marxist who has seen through the sham of "Soviet democracy," Mr. Wilson simply cannot see Europe in true focus. For Marxism is essentially a distortion of man.

Finally, having dwelt so long on Mr. Wilson's failings, I should like to end on a note of praise. This author's literary judgment remains sensitive

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My Current Reading

SRL's report on the current reading of well-known figures comes this week from **Harold L. Ickes,** columnist and former Secretary of the Interior:

THE WIND THAT SHAKES THE BARLEY, *by James Barke*
PRESIDENTIAL MISSION, *by Upton Sinclair*
YOUNG HENRY OF NAVARRE, *by Heinrich Mann.*
INSIDE U.S.A., *by John Gunther*
REVOLUTION BEFORE BREAKFAST, *by Ruth and Leonard Greenup*
PRINCE OF FOXES, *by Samuel Shellabarger*
THE MONEYMAN, *by Thomas Costain*
GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT, *by Laura Z. Hobson*
BEHIND THE SILKEN CURTAIN, *by Bartley Crum*
DARK DECEMBER, *by Robert E. Merriam*

and sure. Whether in judging the "spun sugar prose" of MacLeish at his worst or comparing the novels of the "gaulliste" Malraux with those of the socialist Silone, Mr. Wilson sees straight and speaks true.

His final reflections I found pleasantly provocative. He admits enjoying the advantages of living as a foreign spectator. He understands that giving democracy to the unprepared underprivileged (as in America) almost inevitably results in an untrammeled grab for money and in the deterioriation of standards. "The bourgeoisie, before they took over officially, were a well-educated group, with plenty of experience of handling property and of discharging public responsibility."

He notes the similarity (despite the differences) between Stalin's ruling group and the worst type of American millionaire. Despite the Russian failure, he still believes that socialism is compatible with democracy. (So do I. But I am beginning to wonder if state socialism that lumps the economic power on top of the political, is the answer.) Mr. Wilson thinks—as I do—that the passive Russians more or less allowed Stalin "to become their tyrant."

He has a faith in eugenics which nothing that I have yet learned enables me to share. "The ideal of equality on a low social level" is not only impossible, as he opines, but it seems to me, undesirable. Either the level must come up or equality must go. He gets a curious kick out of considering man as "himself an animal" and enjoys contemplation of the anthropoids. (So does Edmond Taylor.) Finally, Mr. Wilson finds, "the United States is at the present time politically more advanced than any other part of the world." I, too, believe this. But I submit that before this belief can find general acceptance, it needs further demonstration.

Confused and Menacing

I WANT TO BE LIKE STALIN. By B. P. Yesipov and N. K. Goncharov. New York: The John Day Co. 1947. 150 pp. $2.

Reviewed by JAMES MARSHALL

"NOTHING could be more comforting to the Soviet teacher," says this leading book on pedagogy used in the great Russian teacher training institutions, than to hear the sincere expression by his pupils, "I want to be like Stalin." For "Comrade Stalin himself is a model of humaneness." He is, moreover, "beloved father of the workers, leader of the people, organizer of victory over the fascists and enemies of our Motherland."

It is no surprise to Americans that Stalin, the "beloved father," has succeeded Czar Nicholas, the "little father," much as the secret police of the proletarian dictatorship and the imperialist ambitions of the Soviet Republic have assumed the cloak and dagger of the czaristic police and the mantle of imperialism of the empire. What will be new to most of us is that American educators could sit down with Soviet educators and—up to a point—speak a common language of pedagogy.

Here, as in the fields of science, technology, and music, there could be a common meeting ground for men of good will if they could come together. That they cannot get together is the logical result of the aggressive drive behind that portion of the book which is foreign to American ears. It is as foreign, as frightening, and as laden with sulphurous threat as were *bushido* and the Nazi "education for death."

The authors emphasize the fact that each pupil has his own peculiarities, that no children are identical, and that the living child, not some abstraction, must be the center of educational attention. American teachers would not contradict this. They would agree to the importance of the teacher consulting with parents and with the close relationship between patriotic sentiments and feelings of love for friends and family developed in early childhood. The importance of cultivating sound and orderly habits and much of the analysis of habit formation and the teaching of habits contained in this Russian manual would be acceptable to Americans. Corporal punishment is not permitted; shaming pupils frowned upon. One of the greatest tragedies in the world today is that such common ideas cannot be discussed and developed joint-

Uneasy

By Agnes Rogers

ASCEPTIC I, by reason ruled,
By logic disciplined and schooled,
Telepathy and second sight,
The fears and fancies of the night,
Accounts of visions and clairvoyance
I greet with ill-concealed annoyance.
I laugh more noisily than most
At tales of warlock, werewolf, ghost,
Resisting all such foolishness
Unto the point of mulishness.

There are, however, I'll admit,
Some things I do not like one bit.
I hate it when a rocking chair
Begins to rock with no one there.
I don't like furniture that creaks,
I do not like a cat that speaks.
And certain recent incidents
Have gravely shocked my common sense.

For instance, just the other night
I chose to read by candle light,
And though there was no draught about
The light turned blue, and then went out.
And last week Tuesday on the lawn
My shadow flickered—and was gone.
(That was the day an extra pair
Of footprints followed mine I swear.)
This morning when I stirred in bed
There sat a toad beside my head,
And just as I was wide awake
Across the ceiling crawled a snake.

I wonder if it's getting nearer,
The time when, glancing in a mirror,
I see reflected—not my face
But SOMETHING HORRID in its place.

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ly by educators from all parts of the world.

It is when we come to such matters as the goals of communist education and the kind of discipline which is emphasized in Russian education that we meet matter which is disheartening in the context of international relations. Here the emphasis is on Soviet patriotism, the Communist Party, the Red Army, and the almost deified Comrade Stalin, the "beloved father." "Already in the primary school work is conducted for the purpose of equipping the pupils with those elements of general knowledge which are closely related to the military preparation of future warriors." And discipline in children is cultivated, among other reasons, to prepare them "for organized and disciplined labor in high schools, in production, and in the service of the Red Army."

Hatred gives birth to class revolutionary vigilance, creates a feeling of irreconcilability toward the class enemy, and is therefore a part of the educational scheme. Children are to be taught to "tell" on their classmates who are quilty of pranks and delinquencies. Moral education as a whole is directed to teaching the authority of elders and respect for them, and the breach of the "rules for school children," aimed principally at maintaining order and unquestioning obedience, is to be severely punished.

The inconsistencies in the books are themselves interesting, and evidence of ideological and educational conflict. Thus while conscious discipline which cannot rest on fear is advocated, threats and punishments are recommended if regulations are violated. Independence of moral judgment is to be developed but the teacher must use and lean on his authority. It is important for pupils to behave in a disciplined way when "away from the supervising eye" but responsibility is developed through control and checking. A teacher must make "exactions and not coax his pupils." "He demands obedience." Over and above the teacher-disciplinarian we find that the "Stalinist directive must be an inviolable law in the work of every Soviet teacher, in the work of every school from lowest to highest, and in political work with the entire Soviet people."

It is interesting to note in this textbook of a classless society the constant reference to the "best people." It is amusing to see recommended the educational value of walks and talks with old Bolsheviks. One wonders how many Stalin has left alive unpurged for this purpose.

(*Continued on page* 38)

Personal History.

Edith Wharton and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., were both masters of the high art of conversation; indeed, Holmes is largely known for his wittily conversational "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table." But here the parallel ends. Holmes as a literary figure seems to have slipped from the pinnacle of renown; but Mrs. Wharton, author of the haunting "Ethan Frome," is ascending steadily to new heights. It may be that the sparkling little doctor (whose story is retold in "Amiable Autocrat," to be reviewed in these colums early next month) was too delightfully enmeshed in the hurly-burly of his times to comprehend "the deadly conflict between the American materialism" of his day and "the finer instincts of American life"—to quote our reviewer. This understanding was the strength of Edith Wharton.

Great Talk

PORTRAIT OF EDITH WHARTON. By Percy Lubbock. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc. 1947. 249 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

THIS book is exactly what its title states — no more, no less — and within its narrow limits as perfect a piece of writing as has been done in our decades. It is not a true biography; it is not a literary critique; it is a portrait of notable character and personality such as was written more often in the eighteenth century than today. For in that age it seems to have been easier for the clear, rational intellect to separate the eminent person from his work or his sources in social history and display him as an example of what the human race could produce.

Edith Wharton was such a person in the society which seems to be disintegrating (one hopes only changing) after the Second World War. Her importance as a novelist has not yet been finally assessed, and is not even estimated by Mr. Lubbock. It is sufficient to say for his purposes and the purpose of this review that she was one of the fine American minds that brought into the open the deadly conflict between the American materialism of the last half of the nineteenth century and the finer instincts of American life—also that she was one of the great craftsmen of her day, as skilful as Willa Cather, as penetrating down to a certain level as Henry James, to whom she owed so much, and more readily intelligible. Finally, that she was able—as James, the greater artist, never was—to keep to the highest standards, while capturing the interest of the innumerable readers of the women's magazines.

All this does not much concern Mr.

"Edith Wharton could best be described as a character in a Henry James novel."

Lubbock. He was her close friend, and what he has quite triumphantly done is to display, not the novelist, but the woman he knew. And to give the portrait dimensions and perspective he has skilfully woven into his own composition the tributes and descriptions of other friends as closely related as he was, but with different viewpoints and opportunities. Somewhere he says that Edith could best be described as a character in a Henry James novel. Actually, what he describes is the character which in her nonworking but not noncreative hours she made of herself. This sometimes arrogant aristocrat, this rich woman who knew how to use riches but did nothing without them, was as different from the novelist who studied the decadence of old New York as a financier inside his office and out of it. In her circle of intimates she created a ranging mind as much her own, and hers only, as the houses and gardens she built and organized with such loving care in Lenox and the North of France and on the Riviera. When she was not writing, two in-

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terests absorbed her—houses and gardens, and talk, the first for her friends to see, the second for her friends to share, and call out, and return. Always, no matter how cosmopolitan, how confined by social convention to acquaintances both fine of mind and socially placed, she was the American, intensely curious, always passing instantly from the idea to some kind of action, as when she would descend upon helpless Henry James in his hard-working seclusion at Rye and roar him off in a new giant automobile into contact and sensation.

And indeed this book might have been called "Great Talk." It is this theme I think that urged on Mr. Lubbock more than the riddles of Edith Wharton's puzzling shyness, her rather frequent cold-shoulderings of those she did not like, which a less kind man might have called snobbery, her secret tensions which made her a genius for charity without any discernible interest in or knowledge of the vast social forces which were crumbling her world. It is her brilliant, eager talk as an index to her mind which delights him, and his single anger is against Walter Berry, the American international lawyer with whom she seems to have been in love all her life, whom he accuses of chilling into intellectualism a mind whose outgoings in talk showed her to be warmer and more sympathetic with humanity at large than one would guess from her novels.

And this suggested title indicates the importance of this book, which, as I have said, is not real biography, nor literary criticism, and which is so intimately concentrated upon one person as to seem to appeal only to her friends and admirers. For the talk in this book, of which few specimens are given, seems always to have been about the secondary rather than the primary manifestations of life. I mean that it was concerned with books and art, with communication, and the comments upon life of the critically and philosophically minded. That is, it dealt with experience of the best thought and said, rather than with direct experience itself. This is not a criticism. Such talk has always flowered in a perfected culture. Such talk is necessary for such a perfecting, because it is an awareness of the thing itself, made conscious, and interpreted. And such talk implies the Great Talker, whose insatiable curiosity uncovers the trail to understanding and leads the chase. This kind of mind Edith Wharton created for herself when she released her energies from delving in the facts of life as she saw them for her novels, and let it go free among her friends

to encounter and exchange with the imaginations of other delvers, alive or dead. And if I seem to overemphasize such generalizations as this at the expense of all the interesting people and subtle contacts and acute analyses of behavior in this book—for example, the remarkable household of servants and friends which made life and work possible for her, the "whining" pet dogs to whom she talked with mutual understanding—it is for a good reason. Too many will say of the book that it is a record of a society now dead, recorded from its most specialized and unreproducible members. That is not true. Talk such as I have described, oversimplifying Mr. Lubbock's subtlety, has always reappeared at fleeting but very important periods of man's history. The records of many such periods have been lost, but of others—in Greece, in France, in Goethe's Germany, in Renaissance Italy—we have ample remains. It is a continuing, a reappearing phenomenon which Mr. Lubbock is describing in a woman whom he thinks able to bear the weight of such representation.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

FEMININE NAMES IN POETRY

Brenda Heloise Green, of Cleveland, submits twenty familiar quotations in which feminine names have been omitted. Can you fill in the blanks? Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 24.

1. I am ..... who sleep beneath these weeds,
   Beloved in life of Abraham Lincoln.
2. "Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!"
   Said little .....
3. Speak and tell us, our ....., looking northward far away,
   O'er the camp of the invaders, o'er the Mexican array.
4. I have been faithful to thee, ...! in my fashion.
5. My .....! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
   Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
6. And ..... forgot her brier-torn gown
   And her graceful ankles bare and brown.
7. "Why did you melt your waxen man, Sister .....?"
8. ....., with her basket, was
   Deep in the bells and grass.
9. Is it too late then, ...?
10. O ....., go and call the cattle home.
11. But we loved with a love that was more than love,
    I and my ....
12. Evening by evening
    Among the brookside rushes
    ..... bowed her head to hear,
    ..... veiled her blushes.
13. She lived unknown, and few could know
    When ..... ceased to be.
14. Of all the girls that are so smart,
    There's none like pretty .....
15. Sweet ....., make me immortal with a kiss.
16. Who is .....? what is she,
    That all our swains commend her?
17. O ....! O ....!
    Is this your love so warm?
    The love that wears a scarlet coat
    Should be more uniform.
18. My .....'s asleep by thy murmuring stream.
19. Grave ....., and laughing .....,
    And ..... with golden hair.
20. Whenas in silks my ..... goes,
    Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
    That liquefaction of her clothes.

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The Little People

GORDDEN LINK

FROM time that has no word, we have been and begot
and made our little noise about little things;
we have never been in the way. We have not
raised our voice about anything important; and our kings
have been kind to us. We have not made scenes . . .
except when over-hungry and then with many small
separate angry shoutings but no united thunder.

We have been prey to wonder
and fear and sloth and the weight that custom leans
against the lifting mind. But most of all,
we have been prey to some archaic spell
cast on us in the ancient dark to make us blind
when leaders came showing the way, giving the word.

They have risen out of the dark, they have spoken
in magic ways to set us free, but we have not heard;
rather we have torn them down, and then we could
not tell
what thing possessed us and could not find
moisture for our drouth when the pitcher was broken.

Our little fathers begat them little sons
outnumbering the stars; we were begat
like the fish of the sea, like the seed of the thistle;
begetting was our only talent; our only pride
was that we never buried it. With rocks, then bows,
then guns
we fought to propagate the earth; we clotted;
we recapitulated Genesis;
then, taking our myriad turns, we died.
But they birthed us faster than the myrmidons
of the Black Horseman could spring to saddle;
though we died by villages, by towns, by cities,
though we died by tribes and nations and races,
from starving, from eating, in peace, in battle . . .
and, more than passing pity,
most of us left no traces.

If some there were who tried with words
on rock, papyri, parchment, books as dead as they,
to make us think, to make us dream, to make us look
at birds,
we drove them off, the ones we did not slay,
and they built them little ivory towers
that henceforth we might never enter in;
and we went earnest, looking level with our noses.

We were the little people, and we spent our little hours
sowing our seed and hoping for the best
and doing our duty and solemnly avoiding sin
and laying wreaths of myrtle and of roses
upon the endless rows of crosses growing
where wars had sown our little brave.
And we never knew the cream of the jest;
we never learned that any slave
is only a little man you keep from knowing
that he is free; we crawled over the skin of the earth
faster than plague and war and ignorance and other
natural death
could reap us down; the frightening invincibility of birth
conquered the frightening impermanence of breath.

We could not be killed away, but we remained
the little people of the world, harnessed, chained;
we were just big enough to tread the wheels in the mills,
to blast the coal out of the mines,
to work the furnaces and lathes and kilns,
to crush the grapes and make the wine,
to lay the brick, to fetch and carry.

And for all our swarming and our teeming,
we never took up too much space; we never got in the
way;
we managed to clothe and feed ourselves, to marry,
to keep abreast in some vague manner of all seeming
miracles that come when time and space can multiply
each other,
and when they told us to, we took up arms to slay,
sometimes uncomplaining, brother against brother.

We have held close to our virtues and our sins
as we invented them or delved them out of the ages;
and we have grown soft, we have grown slack,
we have nurtured paunches and double chins;
no need now for thumbscrews, for rack;
we are amenable to push or shove or printed pages;
we are the little people of history.

But always one mystery:
how we survived, how were we sustained . . .
in the dark hours, through the plagues, through the
flights,
through the terrors, through the hungry years,
hounded and beaten, tortured, enslaved, and chained,
what star beckoned in the black nights?
Reaching small windows in the heart's prison,
what star flickered and then stayed firm,
what silver blade of hope cut through fears,
despairs, fatigues, defeats, frustrations,
to point the apotheosis of the worm,
to point a sun not yet but soon arisen?

Among the complacent councils of the nations,
with planned ingratiating smile
the men in togas rise to split a hair
while atoms split upon Bikini Isle
show how the world may soon be torn apart.
Small walls of hate are carefully erected
while whimpering prophetic sounds are left
trembling upon the numb Pacific air
to say that specks of matter neatly cleft—
with studied guile directed—
can tear down piled-up stars and break God's heart.

But louder than explosions made in battle
or conjured out of tubes to burst the peacetime ear
of kings who might be covetous and bold,
comes through the night the terrifying thunder
like hooves of a million herds of cattle
deafening in the distance, incredibly near,
the sound the little people make rallied and uncontrolled.

And here was our curious blunder:
we did not have to wait this long at all;
we did not have to wait until the earth
were poised upon the edge of quick oblivion
before our victory were won.
We might have risen sooner and made our little ball
more than a futile slingshot against the skies;
but we did not stir in time, we did not rise,
and somewhere perhaps the sound of faint Satanic mirth
will follow the little people and their little star
spiralling in a space they could not guess,
falling smokily afar
in little curves to nothingness.

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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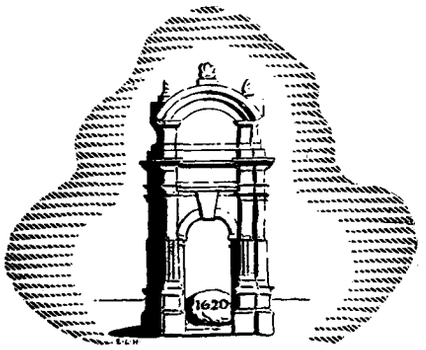
The War of Words

SINCE the last week of September the world has been listening to an ominous debate conducted from the platform of the General Assembly of the United Nations. To the average American the Russian attacks, from Viskinsky's opening blasts to Ilya Ehrenburg's article in *Pravda* on October 7, in which he spoke of us as "cannibals lusting for war profits," have seemed almost ludicrously violent, ill-tempered, and ill-advised. At first, it seemed impossible for reasoning men to take seriously statements, for example, that likened both Winston Churchill and President Truman to Hitler, or that called our spokesmen at the UN "preachers of human murder." They seemed ill-advised not only from the standpoint of world order but for the furtherance of Russia's own political aims. At a time when Americans were surveying with shrinking reluctance the enormous sums that the Marshall Plan would call for in Europe, when there was even doubt that they could be passed through Congress, these violent shouts from Russian throats have already resulted in stiffening the country's backbone. There are irritation and gloomy bewilderment everywhere. But unless we are deceived, there is a determination that if we must live in a divided world we will endure it, and that we will act vigorously to see that our own interpretation of human freedom and well-being is implemented and given a hearing wherever it can still be heard. The angry Russian, Jugo-Slav, and Polish voices have already lost their power to shock since nothing worse can be said than that we are mass-murderers, hoping and preparing for war. What effect they have had on the millions in Russia and her satellite states, for whom many observers believe they were primarily intended, we do not know, but surely they have increased the danger of war, and surely they have lessened the effectiveness of the UN since its deliberations have become a sounding board for the most blatant nationalist propaganda.

On October 6 came another blow, the news of the formation of a new, or revived, Communist International headed by Soviet Russia. To quote from the usually calm editorial page of *The New York Times*, "The last illusions nourished on the hope that out of the blood and sacrifices of the Second World War there might arise a new world order, based on the common interest of all nations and able to banish forever the specter of new strife, have been dealt a mortal blow . . ."

Now at least, we know where we stand: that there is a propaganda war of the utmost violence directed against us, that there is a division between the two spheres into which the Earth is divided as wide as the Pacific. Since we do not want war and must be determined that there shall be no third world war, what must we do? How can we prepare ourselves against future wild and infuriating accusations and against the dangers to come? There can be only one answer: we must be strong, we must be firm, we must be united, we must be calm. We must not again allow our enemies to be deceived by presenting them with the spectacle of a country that can be so misrepresented abroad that it can be made to appear incapable of getting together in time to win a war. This time there may not be the months and years after the conflagration has broken out in which to mass and implement our tremendous strength. We must, therefore, be formidably armed and ready, and the country must willingly support the burden.

It seems unobjectionable and true enough to write that in this moment of history we must be strong and united, but even this phrase can be attacked in our own country by those who see in the word "strength" military preparations that might of themselves bring about war, or who read the word "united" to mean censorship, intolerance, and concentration camps. This shrinking from facts and plain words has now become an indulgence that will have to be tolerated certainly, but which the common man will be able to dismiss. It may even be possible to be an American patriot once more, to believe in our own country and to say so without being accused of intolerance or suspected of being in the pay of the National Association of Manufacturers.



"If there is a war, would you prefer to have Russia win it?" It may be possible that this simple question will be asked of men who cannot open their mouths without reciting some example of our ineptitude, our inefficiency, and our well-publicized adherence to the weaknesses, cruelties, and follies that the human race has inherited as its legacy from Adam and Eve or its simian ancestors. It may someday be possible to say that Americans are on the whole kind without having the number of lynchings in 1946 hurled into the argument; that we are strong, without having someone mention the number of men and women who are, or who ought to be, in prisons or insane asylums, or to state that we have the highest level of prosperity in the world without having the Wall Street octopus thrown in one's face. It might finally be possible to state openly that one prefers the American way of life to that of any totalitarian country.

It has been said that the leaders of world communism have never ceased their efforts to influence the intellectual life of every country; that they regard the intellectual, the writer, and the speaker as the major targets in their unremitting warfare. The survival of this country as a free nation now depends on the strength in which we believe in ourselves and the ability of the people who deal in such vital commodities as ideas and ideals to express their convictions to our own people and to the world. The great debate must continue, but more than one aspect of it must now be met with the derision and contempt they deserve. We are not war mongers; we prefer our way of life, with all of its faults, to any system that will not tolerate what we recognize as freedom; we have a right to protect ourselves against the aggression of any nation or group of nations; we have the right to speak up for ourselves as our ancestors have in times when their liberties were in danger. We have the duty to try to give to our children's children a world that is safe and secure against the calamities and the alarms in which we have been living for over thirty years. H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Heard of Trollope?

SIR: Louis Bromfield evidently has never read the Autobiography of Anthony Trollope. He says [*SRL* Sept. 13], "We have the word of both Dickens and Trollope that they were consistently pressed for the next instalment and frequently enough did not know what it was till they sat down to write." Trollope says, "Over a course of years I have been enabled to have always on hand . . . one or two, or even three, unpublished novels in my desk beside me. Were I to die now, there are three such besides the 'Prime Minister'."

SHERWOOD LARNED.

Saugerties, N. Y.

SIR: May I put in my two cents' worth in reply to Mr. Bromfield and Mr. Aiken [*SRL* Sept. 20]?

First: To Conrad Aiken, I can only say, oh yeah? I have not found it so. Outside of Maxwell Perkins and ten thousand loyal fans, I've found no one interested in anything I write. I'd like to show him my rejection slips.

Second: To Mr. Bromfield, this. There have been a number of fine books published during the past five years but I've found no one who has read them. Competing with best sellers—many of which stink—they were practically still-born. I have a hundred letters from Mr. Perkins, received during the past ten years, the last one on the day of his death, in which he tells me that I am a writer, that I have something to say and should say it. Usually I replied to him, "Say it to whom? You, or myself? I've not had a sufficiently exciting sex life, and lack the imagination to make it enticing, to write. What I wish to write no one but you wants to read." The literary world is a mystery to me and I have now reached the point where I read nothing but detective stories—and the *SRL*. I'm so tired of boy-meets-girl I could weep, but that is what sells, in a world so exciting, so staggering in its sense of danger. Writers must wake up, speak more truth, use the facts that are more thrilling than fiction.

BELINDA JELLIFFE.

Huletts Landing, N. Y.

SIR: I noticed in Louis Bromfield's recent article that he said I was quoted as saying that writers have "said their say" by the age of forty. This goes to show what I have frequently contended, that no remarks one makes ever come out right after passing through the mind of an interviewer—at least mine never do. Neither, I believe, do Bernard Shaw's, judging from his strictures on the subject. If I ever said such a thing I should obviously have my head examined.

What I did say, because *Time* magazine wanted me to say something—and I think it makes sense—was that a writer after he is forty has developed a definite philosophy, as well as a literary approach, which afterwards seldom undergoes much change. This does not mean that with these foundations he will not mature and will not be able to do increasingly good work in the future. It does mean, however, that you can expect no new approach from him when he faces new problems. If there is to be a new approach in a new sort of literature it must come from younger writers who are developing their styles and their thinking, as Sinclair Lewis and John Dos Passos did in the early twenties.

Though I have said a number of silly things in my time and have done a number of still sillier ones, I hope I know enough about writers and writing not to sound off in quite so blatant a manner.

JOHN P. MARQUAND.

Kents Island,
Newburyport, Mass.

"The weather report you have just heard is a public service and in no way reflects the opinion or policy of this station."

Melville Check-List

SIR: I am compiling a check-list of books that formerly belonged to Herman Melville. I will appreciate hearing from anyone having information on such books. The check-list is scheduled for publication during the winter in the Harvard Library *Bulletin*. Please address me at Wellesley College, Wellesley 81, Mass.

MERTON M. SEALTS, JR.

Wellesley, Mass.

Reformation Dosage

SIR: It would be pertinent to suggest that before Mr. James O. Monroe, Jr., [Letters to the Editor, *SRL* Sept. 20] banks too heavily on his maladjusted youth's "opportunity to think over his past conduct" in the county jail, he recall that Mr. Hitler had the benefit of a similar period of introspection.

The boy obviously is in need of the guidance of a trained psychologist or child psychiatrist. Barring that, the offices of a friendly ear may help purge his mind and uproot the subconscious cause of his behavior problem.

I feel that his reading habit is too important to be jeopardized by being used as the medium for a dose of reformation. The young man is more likely to find the consolations of literature in adventure and sports stories. If this seems to be the case, it may be better to nurture his reading habit with these—providing him always, of course, with an opportunity to choose more substantial fare.

MARY GWYNNE CAMPBELL.

Sea Girt, N. J.

"Skeptic's Seach for God"

SIR: "Skeptic's Search for God," by Barbara Spafford Morgan, is an extraordinary book of philosophic thought which has not, in my opinion, received nearly the attention it deserves. Here is a book for thinkers who have ceased to read about religion and for readers who have ceased to think about it; here is a book for our Young Moderns and equally for our Old Moderns. Unlike most books of its kind, it is short and it is easy reading. It is utterly honest. It is completely understandable. The difficult classic vocabulary of philosophy is either omitted or made clear. The author says in her preface: "This book is an inquiry into the human trinity of mind, heart, and strength in relation to God." And it is exactly that, no more, no less, done by an adult for adults. No one with a restless mind and a searching spirit can read this book without excitement at finding so many vague hinterlands of belief explored and given definition and meaning. Mrs. Morgan has no cult to offer, no sugary promises for the insecure, but she has written a book which belongs with the best of the philosophers, dead or alive.

SOPHIE KERR.

New York, N. Y.

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Fiction. *The novel of "social significance," a label attached to the works of politically-conscious left-wing writers in the Thirties, is beginning to raise its head in the current literary scene. Four of them are reviewed in this issue: Benjamin Appel's bitter account of the fall of the New Deal and most of its works in Washington; Chester Himes's grim recital of the persecution of a sensitive Negro labor organizer in Los Angeles; Robert Rylee's melodrama of power politics in Texas, and Allen Taft's well-intentioned but inadequately treated "American Story." For readers who prefer fiction for entertainment there is an absorbing English murder trial in Edgar Lustgarten's "One More Unfortunate," and Walter Karig's "Zotz" provides a brilliant and amusing parody on Washington's wartime bureaucracy. For a brief masterpiece of endurance and love note C. F. Ramuz's "When the Mountain Fell" next week.*

Ordeal by Jury

ONE MORE UNFORTUNATE. By Edgar Lustgarten. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1947. 202 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD HAYCRAFT

THIS powerful, original, often disturbing first novel about an English murder trial will appeal alike to discriminating devotees of the whodunit (though this is no pattern puzzle) and to those readers who place human values above plot manipulation in their rare excursions into crime fiction.

A brief introductory chapter sets the stage. Kate Haggerty, London streetwalker, is found hacked and murdered in her dismal Soho lodgings, and the circumstantial evidence points inescapably to respectable, middle-class Arthur Groome.

The story proper is the day-by-day account of Groome's trial for life at the Old Bailey, and it is not too much to say that not even "Verdict of Twelve" or "The Bellamy Trial" has captured the grim conflict of the criminal courtroom more effectively. It is easy to believe the publisher's statement that the author has been both a barrister and a journalist. As the former he doesn't miss a legal trick; as the latter he avoids the pitfalls of over-elaboration into which a mere legalist might have fallen. The narration is notable for its economy and compactness, but so artful is the choice of detail that the reader is given the illusion of having lived through every painful minute of the lengthy trial.

For all its excellence, this novel is likely to have one, possibly unintended, effect on its American readers. Accustomed to a legal tradition which rigidly reserves questions of fact in criminal proceedings to the jury of laymen and those of law alone to the bench, it is always something of a shock when we meet the overpowering thirteenth talesman of the English courtroom. I refer to the "summing up" or comment on the evidence by the British trial judge—an individual of enormous prestige, bewigged and addressed as my lord, yet mortal and as such fallible and subject to human prejudice and errors of judgment. Mousy, scrupulously fair Sir Edward Hargreaves, the jurist of this story, is certainly no Jeffreys. Yet observing the shattering effects of his summation, the dread implications of the words "hanging judge" become terrifyingly real. I suggest that few American readers, could they imagine themselves in Groome's position, would choose English trial rather than its American refinement. The novel also contains implications (again possibly unconscious on the author's part) for those who doubt the invariable wisdom and efficacy of capital punishment.

Whatever Mr. Lustgarten's views in these matters, he makes plain his attitude toward the story itself by putting the reader in possession of certain vital facts unknown to any of the participants in the courtroom drama. In an orthodox whodunit this would be intolerable; here, the device only strengthens and enhances the essential irony and tension. The latter element Mr. Lustgarten achieves with admirable restraint, detachment, and understatement, nowhere better illustrated than in the waiting-for-the-jury chapter with its brief but unforgettable picture of the accused's wife. The reader is made to feel suspense, not because of external hysterics on the part of the author, but because he knows the people of the story and cares what happens to them.

"One More Unfortunate" will not find favor with readers who demand sugar coating or hyped-up writing in their crime fiction, but those who value sound craftsmanship for its own sake will count it among the top achievements in its field in this year of somewhat dubious grace. The rather abstruse title acquires point when one learns that it is taken from Thomas Hood's "The Bridge of Sighs": a fact which the publishers neglect to state. Also, so fine and honest a performance would seem to deserve a better format, even in these days, than the publishers have seen fit to lavish on it.

Howard Haycraft, editor, author, and publisher, wrote "Murder for Pleasure: The Life and Times of the Detective Story," first full-length history and survey of police fiction.

Do-Badders

THE RING AND THE CROSS. By Robert Rylee. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. 310 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

QUITE obviously the United States Senator from Texas, Adam Denbow, in Mr. Rylee's novel could not be a prototype for old Jesse Jones who was Secretary of Commerce and head of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation almost until Roosevelt died. Congreave could not be Houston. It is only a weird coincidence that the rich, tough, Texas conservative who goes to Washington to help run the State Department is named Clayton. But in this oratorical melodrama of life and democracy in Texas, Robert Rylee has mixed facts with the furies to produce what may be almost the perfect example of the romantic revival in left-wing literature in these United States today.

In terms of our times the book can only be compared with the florid romanticism of the "Mysteries of Udolpho" which Ann Radcliffe produced in 1794. It contains not only the ruthless not-altogether-native fascism of the Texas rich and the dumb protest of the confused, crowded shipyard workers in wartime. It

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is also as full of medievalism as Marx. Tempestuous music roars up from the piano of a rich nymphomaniac whose beautiful body was spit upon by Loyalists in Spain and who leaves her wedding feasts to become a nun in Texas. Its revolutionists are easily as romantic as its master villain who before he became a public relations director shared a Nobel Prize with a scientifically sinister German. The suggestion of incestuous infatuation is in the book beside the description of the cruel comedy of a roughneck who gets a plain, Bible-reading girl with a twisted back ready and eager for seduction and then leaves her as a practical joke. The book contains a vivid assortment of big and cheap crooks and killers, from the Ku Klux to the chief of the shipyard police. It also contains a hero full of philosophy and good will and a good, beautiful heroine who is present when he is murdered to prevent the possibility that he might become Governor of Texas. As melodrama—and often violently and vividly written melodrama—the book has everything. As convincing fiction, however, the story seems lost in its own furies and rhetoric.

Certainly as a novel about democracy in Texas, it leaves much to be desired. Mr. Rylee is undoubtedly working with materials which are basically veracious. There are nasty things to be uncovered in the crude war-profits by war production in World War II. There was a waste of people in the waste of money—and sometimes both wastes were for private profit. Some of the Texas rich who turn to political power are actually almost medieval in their evil magnificence. Texas is a state in which democracy deserves scrutiny. But Mr. Rylee, who never mentions communism as far as I can remember in this book, but whose radical hero regards Franklin Roosevelt as something between a stooge and a dope, is so steadily melodramatic and oratorical that the book never carries any conviction of reality.

The novel is as overdecorated with romantic ideas as it is with old houses, old families, music, and art. As a result it has little to say clearly to such hopeful Texans as may need such leadership as its hero seems to offer. But it is certainly a book which Ann Radcliffe and her readers would have approved. I suspect that there are enough of the same sort of readers still around to make it a popular novel, but I am certain that even though it boldly mentions in sharp criticism the National Association of Manufacturers by name, it is not an important book about our democracy or our times—or even Texas.

Yawning Pacific

THE VICTORY. By Vincent McHugh. New York: Random House. 1947. 546 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

IN FICTION the war is still with us, and though it is beginning to freeze a little around the edges, it has not merged as yet with the "cold war" about which Walter Lippmann has been writing with such icy and frightening logic. We have seen war correspondents turned into acceptable novelists and novelists into somewhat less inspired fiction reporters. Vincent McHugh, who will be remembered for his fantasy "Caleb Catlum's America," has stolidly placed himself in the second group with his new novel, "The Victory." There are other adverbs to fit his 546-page book, which are not usually applied to novels, such as massively, overwhelmingly, remorselessly; for his record of a voyage in a victory ship across the Pacific and back is indeed overwhelming and remorseless in the sense that he never lets you off one moment or episode of his adventure except when the hero, who is indubitably Mr. McHugh, without even a pair of dark glasses to disguise him, had to quit writing in his diary and go to sleep. No one could indeed have written this book, which is somehow called a novel because there is a slender trickle of plot running through it, unless he had endured all the boredom and the rare moments of excitement of such a wartime voyage. And sure enough, the author is revealed to have been a correspondent for the War Shipping Administration in 1944.

This remarkable and laborious job is prefaced by a description of his own book by Mr. McHugh in the space on the jacket usually sacred to the publisher's blurb. It is as deliberately naïve and as disarming a preface as it has ever been our good fortune to read. It is not meant to be exciting, he says; he was just trying to make it faithful and warm and tangible for the reader. And it isn't a novel, he goes on, that you can run through in an afternoon, because it would blur and grow cold on you; but if you take it at its own gentle pace, you will in the course of time (say a couple of weeks) get a feeling of the people in it and of the shoreless Pacific itself. At the end of this gentle appeal to the reviewer's better nature and natural kindness he adds, "I will tell you a secret of my own. I was trying to write a novel that might perhaps last a little beyond this year and this time. I do

Edgar Lustgarten . . . restrained and detached.

Robert Rylie . . . "melodramatic and oratorical."

—*Sherril Schell.*

Vincent McHugh . . . "naïve and disarming."

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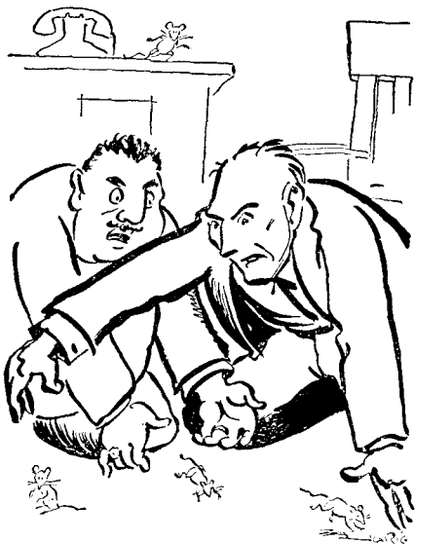
not know whether I have succeeded." Aside from the ethical objections to authors answering on the jacket of their books the complaints they are aware will be hurled at them, this exposition of Mr. McHugh's heart and soul is a little hard to take; and if a critic wanted to be mean about it, he would start in taking the hide off the author just as soon as he had wiped away his tears.

Back in the eighteenth century before Defoe learned how to write novels there were semi-fictional accounts of seafaring life written in this knot-by-knot and day-by-day manner. But the authors then had to deal with such preposterous cruelty, savagery, and dangers at sea in the old sailing tubs that their accounts were inevitably exciting and readable. But tucked below in a cozy cabin of a brand-new Victory ship whose job was to reach a certain bay in the Philippines with its cargo and personnel intact, the days and nights melt into each other almost without incident and merge in the reader's mind into the kind of novel that "blurs and grows cold on you" no matter whether you thumb over each word or try to race through it.

The first section is concerned with the hero's pleasant stay ashore in a hotel with his girl, waiting for the great day when his ship sailed. Oddly enough, he calls the young lady, who seems to contemplate his approaching long absence with a good deal of equanimity, either "Jessup," her last name, or "Son." Whether this means that he thought of her as a gentler male companion or confused her with some dream of unfulfilled paternity which only a psychiatrist could understand, one never knows, though maybe it is just a brave effort to be inconsequential and careless about leaving her, perhaps forever, by trying to think of her as a man who could be quietly left behind without heroics or tears. But Son has a brother in the Philippines fighting with the native guerrillas after he had escaped the Japs. The hero's private mission is not only his public duty of making a record of the trip and photographing the voyage from stem to stern, but to get in touch with this warrior cowhand and perhaps to bring him back. It is the lost brother who thus furnishes the plot, which forthwith relapses until Part Four, entitled "People Singing on the Mountains," brings it to life again on page 467. Jase, the tall young cowhand brother is worth waiting for when you get to him if you haven't forgotten all about him in the meantime. But even with Jase present, the going is pretty slim, for nothing vital happens to him.



—From "Zotz."

Lt. Commander Thomas Heggen also wrote a detailed account of a Pacific voyage in which nothing particular happened, called "Mr. Roberts." But that was a true novel because the author showed the necessary gift for sifting and selecting his material and also made a living portrait of his leading character and delineated sharply the officers and the men. In that particular novel the very monotony which is fatal to Mr. McHugh's novel served its purpose as if it were time and fate and the story itself. The trick, or the artistry it calls for, is not impossible to achieve as "Mr. Roberts" testifies. And another writer managed superbly in the past the long indolent days at sea, Joseph Conrad. It can be done, but the author of "The Victory" has failed to achieve the drama and the unity and revelation of character that any novel demands.

The Fatal Finger

ZOTZ. By Walter Karig. New York: Rinehart & Co. 1947. *268 pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

YOU CAN relax! Here is really good light fiction. Mr. Karig's former work in "Battle Report," three volumes of war history, done in collaboration with other Naval Reserve officers, could not possibly have prepared us for this gem of hilarity. Possibly his other book, "Lower Than the Angels" could, but unfortunately it never came my way.

If you have enjoyed in your time the late Anstey Guthrie ("F. Anstey"), the British Ben Travers, or the American Thorne Smith, you will find this book to your taste. Mr. Karig writes with prime invention, wicked slyness, and a thorough knowledge of Army and Navy official channels, of administrative bureaucracy, of the trusteeship of theological seminaries and their inmates, of the archeological intellect and the female form divine. He can create characters also of great charm and entertaining virtue.

A little rufous relic, with a mystic pentagram incised upon its flinty surface, arrived from a lieutenant in the 412th Tank Corps, AUS, at St. Jude's Theological Seminary (Episcopal) not far from Washington, D. C., addressed to a professor of Semitic languages. That started all the trouble. That, and a most eupeptic brunette. But I must Zotz myself from revealing anything further, save that the action of this incredibly convincing story (or is it convincingly incredible?) proceeds briskly thereafter from a lightning-stricken sycamore to the Cordon Bleu Tea Shoppe on Upper Massachusetts Avenue, with electrifying comedy and tragedy in between.

I have dubbed my review, "The Fatal Finger." But a climax of the story explains that it was not in the finger alone that the power resided which brought stern resolve, wild hope, and the doom of love upon an individual actually named John Jones, because his father had remarked, "It will take diligence and ingenuity for *a* John Jones to become *the* John Jones." Yet he became it; and, as our lingo goes, "and how!" Of course you don't know what I'm talking about, but you will when you have read the book, and you *must* read it.

The narrative contains a few horrors, chiefly (to me) the Hon. Peter Starling, Congressman, marvelously taken off to the life in all his political putridity. Yet one to whom another amiably venal and transient character (who induces the plunge of Jones to the river) is as a minstering angel, is the loathly Mr. Grimper of the trustees of St. Jude's, whose erraticism of speech Mr. Karig reproduces with a touch of genius. Also, about page 185, I became mildly hysterical over General Bullblank of the Air Force. These unfortunately American types are delectable morsels.

Mr. Karig understands the "preposterousness of peccant humanity" passing well, and he is a cultivated and lively humorist. All I ask of him is "more!"

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Ann Rutledge. 2. Wilhelmine. 3. Ximena. 4. Cynara. 5. Madeline. 6. Maud. 7. Helen. 8. Eve. 9. Evelyn Hope. 10. Mary. 11. Annabel Lee. 12. Laura and Lizzie. 13. Lucy. 14. Sally. 15. Helen. 16. Sylvia. 17. Nelly Gray. 18. Mary. 19. Alice, Allegra, and Edith. 20. Julia.

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Through Many Eyes

LONELY CRUSADE. By Chester Himes. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1947. 398 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ERIC L. MCKITRICK

THOUGH it is generally felt, and rightly, that "equality" (in the strictest sense of the word) among human beings can never be more than merest illusion here in America or anywhere else, only a Negro can best realize what sort of basic equality is necessary before the real inequalities among men may be justly considered. Otherwise what good does it do for the Negro and for his immortal soul that a white man befriend him, eat with him, sleep with him, live with him in the social community, if the fact itself does not exist within his own soul? "Some of my best friends are Negroes" can not possibly be more of a noble utterance than "Would you want your sister . . ." simply because, of course, there is nothing whatever to be noble about. True acceptance involves no other sacrifice than a completely honest intellectual effort to confront the question: *Why not?* All his life, Lee Gordon had run into people who never quite got that far, and who never would.

Comrade Jackie Forks, for instance. Jackie is a white girl who is doing her bit for the Party (up to its usual tricks in Los Angeles, 1943) and she pretends to forget that she is white. Lee imagines she understands him since his own wife doesn't—although Ruth, his wife, is the only person in the world who ever really loved him, outside of his mother. Though Lee has taken a job as a union organizer, a job which he feels might help restore his sense of dignity, he finds wartime Los Angeles one of the last places on earth in which to entertain such high hopes. Throughout a turbulent story seething with violence, he is tortured constantly with his fancied deficiencies as a man, problems which might never have presented themselves had he not been born black. He gets involved with the local Communists, is beaten by deputies, framed in a murder, and trampled on generally.

Where does the truth enter this dismal scene? Chester Himes has given us a psychologically unstable protagonist; to stay with him often requires that the reader's sympathies work overtime, and the events in the story run a dizzy race with credibility. However, the mirror is held up to nature every day in the liberal press, and social documentation is not exactly Mr. Himes's purpose. I feel that as an artist he, like all others, is entitled to paint with the broad brush, to objectify any way he wishes the complex, often highly contradictory, sometimes violent, almost always suppressed inner torments of the sensitive Negro who tries only to keep his head decently above water. There is no one better qualified than he to explore to their bitter depths all these painful processes.

The problem is pried into from just about every angle and viewed through many eyes. The Marxists, the Southern whites, the patronizing appeasers, the phony intellectuals, the sex-curious white women, the Jews, the Negroes themselves, all types of them, all have their fair innings.

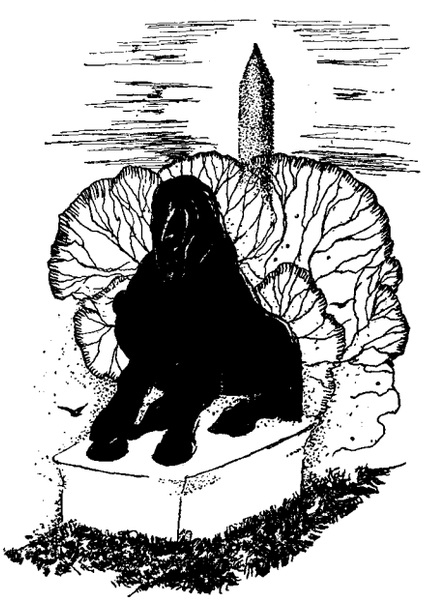
Eric McKitrick has tasted commercial art, advertising, public relations, music, reading, history, architecture, sports. A veteran, he has now settled on a literary career.

Last Hot Glance

BUT NOT YET SLAIN. By Benjamin Appel. New York: A. A. Wyn. 183 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

WHILE we are still in the mammoth shadow of a recently published 1,500-page novel, it is interesting to note how much can be done at the other end of the scale, within a circumscribed space. I think that for the precision of its attack and the variety of its accomplishment this brief novel is highly successful. It projects a double portrait —first of all a fluid intellectual atmosphere caught at a time of critical transformation, and then, in small and intensified form, this same transformation working upon a man transfixed by the change like a specimen insect. The scene is Washington, the time is After Roosevelt. The cat is gone, and the mice are squealing and capering and fouling his lair. We have been watching this spectacle for two years now and we have followed its progress in every newspaper report from the new Washington, where New Deal has become a pair of dirty words and liberals are hunted like rabbits. It is all here, etched in frank bitterness: the dancing upon FDR's grave and the studied destruction of his work. Mr. Appel has used for focal point one of the liberal alphabetical agencies that have been shriveling one by one in the wintry blast. The procedure is familiar to us now: the shrinkage of idealism at the top, the toning down of objectives, the palliatory speeches; the happy yapping of the Roosevelt baiters in Congress, the inquisitorial hearings, the raking up of the criminal liberal past (Isn't it true that you signed these anti-fascist petitions?); the cutting of appropriations, the hounding of personnel, resignations, desertions, the end.



It is a kind of tragi-comic morality play, one of those crises which reveal the latent lesions in all concerned. Washington is a drifting ship. Once it had a captain, and knew its direction. Now the passengers and crew wander about in a crescendo of nervousness and tension. Nobody to lead them, or restrain. Idealism doesn't seem so real, nor courage so fine. What does it do to the men? Matt Wells came to the agency to work for a New Deal everywhere, when that meant something. Now, with Corning, the agency head, retrenching sharply on ideals, with Sessions, the irreconcilable Roosevelt planner, heading for a last-ditch fight, with Congress waiting on the sidelines to cut him down if he stirs—Wells is torn upon a rack of indecision. He can make no move without disaster; it is his career or his conscience, and he can't be happy with only one. The result is a very swift disintegration. The man actually breaks down before us, and we can see every harassed step of it, from the loss of mental tone to the final gesture at suicide. Breakdown caused by being lost in a political maze may be a definitive symptom of these times. Mr. Appel exhibits the maze and its victims with telling vigor. Not impersonally, of course. Mr. Appel, who has himself returned from service with the government agencies, plainly had not the stomach for a fine objectivity. This is his last hot backward glance, with a flash of optimism at the end that is not too convincing.

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FICTION

Puppet Harangue

AMERICAN STORY. By Allen Taft. New York: Arco Publishing Co. 1947. 240 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by JOHN BATEMAN

AFTER reading a book like "American Story" one's first impulse is to make a dual report on it, something like what follows: This is a fine theme, a most important sermon for our day. Allen Taft says we in America must understand and love one another, Protestant, Catholic, and Jew, children of one God, brothers in one destiny. To this a harty amen. We need to hear it said often and earnestly, as Mr. Taft says it. (And then, apologetically:) Of course we might wish he had written it better. We are afraid the writing seems amateurish at times, and the plot is so bolstered with stale contrivances, the characters so stuffed with phony dialogue—However, the idea is the important thing, isn't it?

It is, and that's why we have to forego the pleasantries of the dual approach. A book is all one, because it can't be any better than its writing, because the idea draws its life and substance from the story that has been constructed to illustrate it. And this story just isn't good enough to speak its piece. There are three lads—Karl Eckert, Protestant, Dennis Malone, Catholic, David Levinson, Jew. They grow up on the streets of Brooklyn in a defensive alliance against all of the forces of prejudice that would act violently to separate them. They mature, meet with love and marriage and their several personal crises, stagger through two world wars, and emerge on this side of peace somewhat the worse for wear but still clutching close the truth of tolerance and unity. This, roughly, is the program. It is filled in with melodramatic turns of events, with many reachings of coincidence's long arm (meeting and losing and getting girl; child left on doorstep; will young mother ever find her child again?; she will), with florid speeches

and lush emotional flurries. It seems to seethe constantly, yet not with life.

I can sum up this disparity of effort and effect only by saying that none of these characters seems real, none of their hectic experiences seems important. They are too much like busy and gesticulating puppets acting out their shadow play: the Catholic, the Jew, and the Protestant, with much buffeting about and ventriloquial accompaniment. Compared with a book like "Gentleman's Agreement"—which limits itself to examining merely the intellectual implications of anti-Semitism, and gives to that examination the stunning impact of reality—this one is plainly immature, first thoughts on a terribly complex problem.

Tailor-made Uncle

MOON OVER THE BACK FENCE. By Esther Carlson. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 191 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by HOLLIS ALPERT

I WASN'T too sure about this book at first. Humorous fantasy is such a touchy proposition that you never know who is going to react to it and who isn't. But I thought "Moon Over the Back Fence" was a lot of good fun, and decided to test it on a few people. I read a chapter aloud to three of my friends, and I'm happy to report that two out of three laughed quite hilariously at practically the same things I did. The third was a rather literal-minded person and he remained skeptical and relatively unmoved throughout my reading of the chapter about Cousin Fred and his strange Australian wife. "It sounds crazy," he said, succinctly.

But the other two asked for more, so I tried the one about Uncle George's unusual but utilitarian birthday present, while my one dissenter looked through the real estate section of *The New York Times*. By the time I'd read two other chapters, about the watermelon vine that grew on Grandpa Eddie's Model-T coupe and Uncle George's discovery of gold in Graveyard Creek, I began to realize that here was a handy book to have around. You could not only entertain yourself, but others as well. In addition, I had helped to sell two copies.

The jacket doesn't say too much about Esther Carlson, just that she was born in Iowa twenty-seven years ago, that she went to a couple of colleges and had some stories in magazines. This is her first book.

It is usual enough to have a first novelist write about his or a thinly veiled someone else's childhood years. But Esther Carlson has taken the subject of childhood and made it into something very special. She has not only captured the spontaneous, richly imaginative quality of a child's mind; she has made of it whimsical, entertaining fantasy.

Ellen, a small girl, has an uncle George and they spend a summer together, having adventures, making explorations of the world existing physically between the back-yard fence and the corner drug store. But between them they see into that world in a way that grownups seldom do. Uncle George, of course, is a remarkable sort of grown-up person. He carries a Mickey Mouse watch in his trousers pocket, has no more spending money than Ellen, and always helps her with the supper dishes. He is fully as inquisitive as she is, and is able to tell her the kind of stories she likes to hear. And he's aware that the moon seen over the back fence might very well be the eye of God shining or glaring, as the case may be, right on you.

He's a made-to-measure uncle for Ellen and why wouldn't he be, since she made him up herself? And there's a made-up quality about this book, as though the author was only trying to have some fun, after all—not bothering to be clever or profound. Actually, this small book adds up to not much more than a series of purely whimsical sketches about Ellen, Uncle George, and a few other members of the family. But Esther Carlson has a very real story-telling gift, a knack of being continually diverting. Where it will take her, I don't know, but I wouldn't be surprised if a lot of young people around Ellen's age discover this book or have it discovered for them by their elders. And very likely they'll ask for more.

You can't really put this book up against "Dream Days" or "The Golden Age," for that kind of thing comes along all too seldom, but it comes very close to being next best. And not altogether by default. Esther Carlson has also recreated a few of those golden days and in a way that is very much her own.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 708)

OGDEN NASH:
MORE ABOUT PEOPLE

Anybody at leisure
Incurs everybody's displeasure.
It seems to be very irking
To people at work to see other people not working.
So they tell you that work is wonderful medicine—
Just look at Firestone and Ford and Edison.

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Belles-Lettres.

Ellery Sedgwick's "The Happy Profession," published in September 1946, easily won top honors among SRL *editors as their most marked-up-book-of-the-year. There were numberless passages worth underscoring; in addition to which we had a good chance to compare notes on Sedgwick's philosophy of editing and the accounts of his dealings with contributors. Now, in the present selections from* The Atlantic Monthly, *Sedgwick offers what is something of a companion volume to "The Happy Profession," his theories coming to life by way of actual examples—a tribute to his varied but exacting literary tastes. . . . Don't be surprised if the new editing of Peacock reviewed below touches off a Peacock revival comparable to the renewed interest in Trollope which was set in motion a few years ago.*

Exuberant Husbandry

ATLANTIC HARVEST. Edited by Ellery Sedgwick. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 63 *pp.* $4.50.

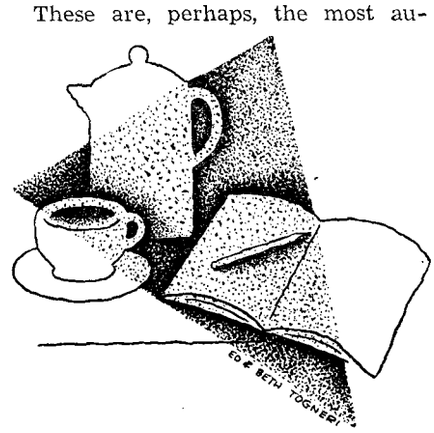
Reviewed by JAMES GRAY

A GROUP of publishers once sat at luncheon talking shop. A certain acid tone of protest ran through what they had to say about their writers. The demands of this one were fabulous; the nerves of that one, quite unendurable. An outsider sitting among them became embarrassed. "Aren't you people being a little indiscreet?" he suggested. "You have a spy within the gates. After all, I'm a writer." There was a moment of awkward silence, and then a warmly maternal member of the group said, with an air of paying the prettiest of all possible compliments, "Oh, but you don't seem like a writer."

It has been Ellery Segdwick's great good fortune as an editor that he likes writers even when they seem like writers. His charming autobiography offered testimony to his indulgence in the very title, "The Happy Profession." To the new anthology of stories, essays, and articles gathered from *The Atlantic Monthly*, "Atlantic Harvest," he contributes a preface and introductory notes that display once more his exuberant, forgiving, and discerning temper. The perfect aptitude for his task and the complete adjustment to its problems that carried him through thirty years of editorship make him still the friendliest of guides through the varied realm of letters. He packs appreciation away in a salty epigram and escorts "the noble art of praise" down out of its misty upper reaches to a level of conciseness and clarity. What he says of authors' private habits of mind is revealing and important, as criticism. Yet Mr. Sedgwick's wise, indulgent humor embraces all their oddities as well as their distinctions in a kind of fatherly acceptance which banishes from the anthology the bleak, impersonal tone such volumes often have. Here the happy profession displays all its grace.

The material itself shows, often rather surprisingly, how well *The Atlantic Monthly* has responded to the changing moods of American life. Anyone who has allowed himself to suppose that the *Atlantic* has been, by habit and intent, the reticent and soft-spoken mouthpiece of New England's conservatism should examine this survey carefully. Here Mark Twain speaks out the most dismal of his misgivings about our society. Hemingway is permitted to intrude with a story of the prize ring so candid that the disciples of ruggedness among magazine editors considered it unprintable. At a moment when the president of Harvard and his associates had given the sanction of their mature reflection to the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, the *Atlantic* opened its pages to a re-consideration of the cause célèbre, based on a last-minute interview, just before the execution, between Vanzetti and the cool, conservative attorney who believed him to be innocent.

These are, perhaps, the most audacious departures from concern with pure literature. But, in its search for color and liveliness, the *Atlantic* has been receptive to irreverent talents and to documents of curious, extra-literary interest. Mr. Sedgwick's catholicity of taste includes such ribald items as A. P. Herbert's delirious spoof at Shakespearean drama in one passage of which a recipe for a dry Martini is tinkled out in blank verse. A sad and striking bit of Americana describing the marriage of a cultivated woman to a Kentucky moonshiner broadens the view of our American world almost to the limit of its dramatic possibilities. All these evidences of the humorous and tragic extravagance of the human spirit have interested Mr. Sedgwick and have added to the value of his magazine as a transcript of the life of our time.



He has not, to be sure, been the only begetter of the work collected here. His choices cover the period from 1864 to 1938. But what he has borrowed from previous editors he has made his own by virtue of his appreciation of its quality.

That curious, steady radiance of literary inspiration that shone through the turn-of-the-century period is reflected intermittently in these pages. Mrs. Wharton glitters again in a story typical of her best moment before she began perversely to make a caricature of her gift of irony. Sara Orne Jewett displays the perfection of her technique. Agnes Repplier's slightly Gothic distinction of style lends itself appropriately to an essay on the cat, in and out of literature. Woodrow Wilson reveals himself as an admirable critic of literature seeming to be perfectly at home in this alcove of thought and to have no foreknowledge that wars and rumors of wars were to blow about his head. William James, on the other hand, writes a warning against the war spirit which is as sensible (and sad) as it was when he first set it down.

A majority of the writers whose work belongs to a later period Mr. Sedgwick, no doubt, kept on the "vagabond path" of authorship because he was able to show them the goal of publication—Anne Douglas Sedgwick, for example, A. Edward Newton, James Norman Hall, Walter Edmonds, and Katharine Fullerton Gerould. One suspects that it was he who first whispered the seductive word, autobiography, in the ears of John Buchan, Margot Asquith, and Sacha Guitry. The results of most of these promptings have been pleasant and profitable for they have opened up doors on worlds about which American readers would otherwise have known nothing. It must be said

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that there are stuffy items in the collection, to be sure. The world loved Ellen Terry up to the moment of her death as a woman who knew how to make her personal charm reveal the tragic beauty of Juliet's character; yet she managed to be trite and silly when she wrote a little piece about the letters in Shakespeare's plays. In Henry Villard's hands the history of certain phases of Lincoln's career crumples into dust.

Mr. Sedgwick's "harvest" shows the virtue of diversification in planting. He has worked no one field or sought to grow merely a crop of controversy. He has not neglected the nourishing items of field, garden, and orchard but like an imaginative husbandman has encouraged the development of species, too.

But the figure of speech suggested by his title should not be belabored. Ellery Sedgwick has been, as his anthology proves, a resourceful editor because everything in our world has interested him and he has tried to offer glimpses of its wide variety. But he has been successful chiefly, I think, because he has liked writers and has known how to make them serve simultaneously their interests, and his, and the interest of literature which is to get down on paper lasting souvenirs of the world in which we live.

Vintage Wit

THE PLEASURES OF PEACOCK. Edited with an introduction by Ben Ray Redman. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co. 1947. 458 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by RICHARD MCLAUGHLIN

MANY of us are Peacockians without knowing it, if we seek good talk in the books we read. There are still others among us who keep a volume of Peacock's rare vintage humor along with Saki and Swift on the bedside table, knowing full well that alongside Swift's moody bitterness and Saki's merciless art for mimicry Thomas Love Peacock emerges the most genial if the most obscure satirist of the trio. But it is this genial satirist who has become increasingly more of a tonic. And now Mr. Ben Ray Redman has thoughtfully collected together in a sizable but handy volume all of Peacock's novels either in whole or in part, to convert many more readers to Peacock, as well as to make loyal Peacockians more loyal than ever.

Peacock, well-known for his friendship with Shelley, occupies a unique position in English literature. It is said that there was nothing like his type of novel before his time. Still, we wonder if this would have been quite the situation had it occured to Swift to put the mantle of fiction on his "Polite Conversation." Certainly Peacock was not the first to use his characters as puppets and mouthpieces for his ideas; or not the last, as the intellectual content of Aldous Huxley's novels will testify today. Yet we agree with Mr. Redman when he says that to enjoy that "peculiar mixture of literary satisfaction" which Peacock gives to his readers, we must go directly to him. Recognizing the possibility of progenitors and still more of descendants, we must also recognize the fact that no one can quite give us the Peacockian essence as Thomas Love Peacock can himself. There is nothing in literature really to take the place of "Nightmare Abbey" and "Crochet Castle"; Shelley said of the former, "I know not how to praise sufficiently the lightness, chastity, and strength of the language of the whole." As for "Crochet Castle," it has been called the most mature and thoroughly characteristic of all Peacock's works, "an unconquerable fortress of wit and scholarship."

What is this form, so peculiarly suited to Peacock's need of expression, which he cultivated? Mr. Redman sums it up very nicely when he describes "Headlong Hall" as:

> a short work of fiction with picturesque rural background, in which a little love and a little horseplay yield precedence to the marches and countermarches of opinion; the encompassing satirical climate being mollified by genial winds of humor.

We have in Peacock the geniality of the intellectual man, accompanied by a keen perception for the ridiculous. Lovers of Peacock will not only vouch for this, but will agree that once they become fully familiarized with the types that people his novels they come to look forward to the verbal joustings, the raillery and lively debates in his pages with much the same expectancy as though they were about to dine with old and cherished friends. It is a jovial company we keep, indeed, when we are with Peacock. His people may talk until they are blue in the face but there is always good wine and excellent feasting to revive them for another bout of conversation. Where else in literature today could we turn to find such a skilful grouping of "perfectibilians, deteriorationists, statu-quoites, phrenologists, transcendentalists, political economists, theorists in all sciences, projectors in all arts, morbid visionaries, romantic enthusiasts, lovers of music, lovers of the picturesque, and lovers of good dinners," except in Peacock's wonderful world?

Peacock has perhaps never had a very wide audience because of the highly intellectual quality of his work; also his lack of the ordinary qualifications of the novelist has not exactly helped his popularity. With little or no plot, no human interest, and no consistent delineation of character, with personages as mere puppets or, at best, incarnations of abstract qualities, is there any wonder that Peacock's novels have often passed for pantomimes? But what delightful pantomimes! Peacockian characters think nothing of bursting into song or waxing poetic without any provocation; and many of the ballads and songs interspersed through Peacock's tales have a decided charm which some of his longer poems do not possess.

"Nightmare Abbey" and "Crochet Castle" appear complete in the collection. It is a disappointment to find that space requirements apparently made it impossible to reprint the other five novels in their entirety. However, Mr. Redman's editorial bridges are extremely helpful. Like all ardent Peacockians he cannot help but have a feeling for the Peacockian mood, so to speak, to the extent, anyway, of never entirely cutting us off from the atmosphere of good cheer which pervades Peacock's "house-party novels."

While we are on the subject of "house-party novels" it is expedient that we explain here that Peacock's house parties are unlike any that we have ever attended. In the first place the setting is usually laid in some remote Welsh or North Country region of fens, moss-grown walls, and bleak cliffs. The semi-dilapidated picturesqueness of the ancient stronghold we are taken to, however, invariably serves as background for the satirical commentary we might expect to have overheard in a London drawing room of the times. It is but further evidence of Thomas Love Peacock's lively sense of the ludicrous that he should be able to superimpose his pithy wit, good common sense, and hearty scepticism on such Gothic landscapes, and still not tax our credulity. To Ben Ray Redman must go unstinted plaudits for having reintroduced us to Mr. Escot, Mr. Foster, The Reverend Doctor Gaster, Mr. Nightshade, Anthelia Melincourt, Sir Oran-Haut-Ton, Mr. Feathernest, Mr. Forrester, Sir Telegraph Paxarett, Scythrop, Mr. Flosky, Mr. Listless, Marienetta, Mr. Toobad, Mr. Eavesdrop, Mr. Toogood, Lord Facing-bothways, *et al.*, together for the first time in one volume.

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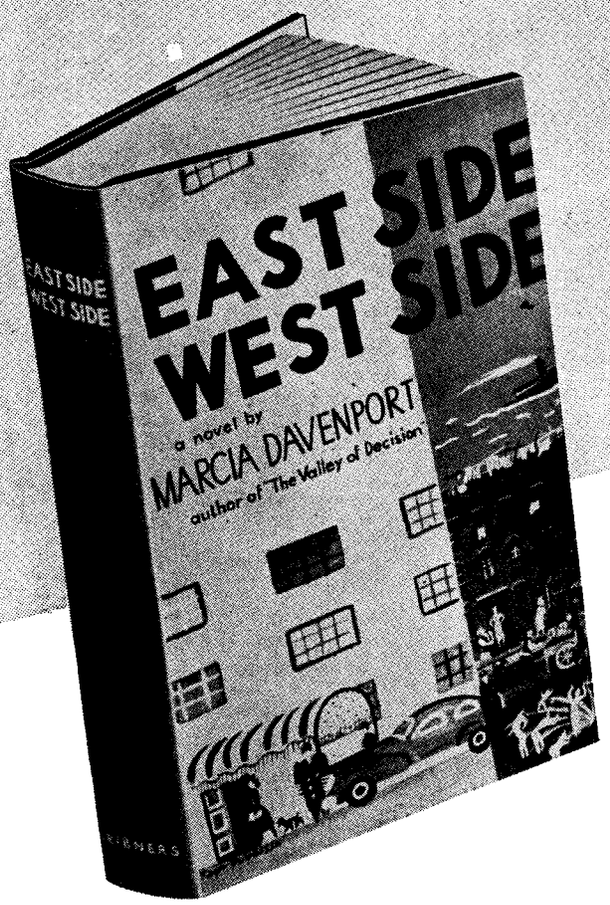

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Seeing Things

STARS THAT WEIGH A TON

SURELY no one can have forgotten Willie and Joe. The war on its highest echelons produced no more famous figures. At least in America. They could be told apart only by their schnozzles. Willie supported a grandiose Roman affair; Joe a modest lump for breathing. Save for such recognition signals, the two men were twins beneath their helmets. Almost identical, too, in the sogginess of their uniforms, the thickness of their beards, the toughness of their mugs, and their allergy to Brass. If Willie and Joe were less than flesh, they were more than mortal. They functioned as perfect ventilators for all the gripes and humors, the resentments and discomforts, of GI's everywhere who had endured the mud and blood of combat.

What has become of Mr. Mauldin's dogfaces in civilian life, I do not know. Having survived the worst, they deserve the best. I know only that I wish it were possible for me to sneak them into a performance of "Command Decision"* and watch their reactions to it.

In the presence of William Wister Haines's drama about an American Air Force Command stationed in England, they certainly would not serve as stand-ins for Hazlitt's Joseph Fawcett. Fawcett, you may recall, was an unexceptious fellow. He nursed no prejudices and was the possessor of the most catholic tastes. His mind, which was "wax to receive and marble to retain," was so open that A. B. Walkley once offered him as the equivalent of Aristotle's Ideal Spectator.

No one in his right senses would think of parading Willie and Joe as ideal spectators for "Command Decision." Their minds would in advance be locked, barred, and bolted against the play's theme. One look at the program, announcing as it does the appearance of two captains, four majors, two colonels, two brigadiers, and one major general, would send their blood pressure soaring. Confronted with so much Brass, they would probably feel as lonely as patrols in enemy territory. Yet if only Willie and Joe could be persuaded to stop, look, and listen, instead of digging for the nearest exit, some enlightening surprises would come their way. They might even have their baggy eyes opened, precisely as Mr. Haines's play will open the eyes of all who see it, to one of the most ignored aspects of war. This is the agony suffered by commanding officers whose luckless but necessary task it is to send young men on missions, knowing full well that many of them will not return.

The unthinking overlook this agony. They are fond of picturing admirals and generals as leading, in or out of Washington, the lives of Riley. Each war, of course, produces military figures who win the affection of their men no less than their obedience. Such leaders achieve a popularity so widespread that they are forgiven their privileges. They are the exceptions. The hero-stuff is in them. They are brilliant at their jobs. Their courage is unquestioned; their consideration proved. Since their personalities are polarizing, they emerge as symbols of the cause for which the obscure are asked to die.

Assuredly, the most surly and ignorant of the last war's underprivileged must admit that all generals and admirals do not die in bed. Even so, the democratic spirit chafes under military autocracy. It does not adjust itself without effort to a world of either death or discipline. As a compensation for what it must surrender, it evolves a gargantuan gift for scorn.

The gob in a landing craft heading into a beach, the man in a slit trench, the tail gunner in a plane under fire naturally develops a talent for comparisons. These may not be fair, but they are inevitable and usually they are odious. Such men would not be human if they did not snarl when they contrast their own plight with that of the admiral being kowtowed to in the tidiness of his flagship. Or the luxury (wine-mess and all) enjoyed by a commanding general often far behind the lines in a requisitioned chateau.

The anonymous fellow, the little man who is ordered into action, is well aware of how vainglorious military leaders can become. He has suffered enough at the hands of pompous nonentities just above him to be suspicious of the men at the top. Having once been an individual, he does not relish the idea of having dwindled into Government Issue. He cannot be expected to find pleasure in the realization that he is and must be expendable. His nearness to danger creates in him a contempt for those who are removed from it. He is too deep in discomforts, too robbed of privileges, too close to death to do justice to another man's responsibilities.

YET THESE responsibilities have tormented every commanding officer worthy of his rank. To die young and unfulfilled is terrible. But to live with the knowledge that you have been responsible for the death of these same young and unfulfilled must also be terrible. No schooling in any academy which trains men in the making of war can eradicate that much humanity among men who were not brutes to start with. It can only teach them how to surrender to the remorseless logic of events and think through in impersonal terms decisions which destroy personalities. It grants them the courage to concentrate upon large objectives, however hideous may be their individual costs. This does not mean that the man on the flag bridge or in the remote headquarters fails to suffer greatly. It means that of necessity he has steeled himself to put his duty above his feelings.

No dogface, however bitter, can have envied, for example, General Eisenhower the responsibility which was his when, following the postponements of D-Day and after a few hours' fitful sleep, he met his staff at 4:30 a.m. on June 5th to announce, "All right, we move." The subordinate

—*Graphic House.*

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commanders hurried from the room to issue the necessary orders. The Supreme Commander was the last to leave. "He was walking heavily," Allan Michie wrote, "and those who saw him later remarked that each of the eight stars on his shoulders seemed to weigh a ton."

"Never risk men in operations that cannot achieve a decisive result," was one of Eisenhower's battle mottoes. There had been those on his staff who had opposed the move. At least one had insisted that to land men on the Normandy beaches in doubtful weather would be "murder." The word "murder," as Kenneth S. Davis has suggested in his biography of the General, must have rung in Eisenhower's ears as he drove up in his Cadillac to airfield after airfield and got out to say goodbye to the young men he was sending across the Channel. Landing in France was not easy. Enduring the loneliness and apprehension of the long hours of waiting must have been hard, too.

Apparently Admiral Halsey is another who was no stranger to the ordeal undergone by General Eisenhower. Even before recent happenings in Washington, the services at the top have long been unified in this respect.

"You can't make omelets without breaking eggs!" Admiral Halsey would say to his staff—half defiantly, half apologetically—when he had no other choice than to order a dangerous mission. Thereafter, and until the mission was completed, we are told in "Admiral Halsey's Story," he would pace up and down, twiddle a cigarette, take out his lighter, and twiddle the cigarette again. Joseph Bryan says the Admiral was in the habit of referring contemptuously to what he called his "nut mail." Yet Mr. Bryan adds, "The rare letters that accused him of callousness towards human life—every combat officer has received them—made him mope for days afterwards."

At the time of the Guadalcanal campaign Admiral Halsey wondered whether he had been right in following the advice of a friend who had told him years earlier to "stick to the Navy." By his own confession he spent many a sleepless night, "nights when men were dying because my orders kept them there," nights when he questioned the soundness of the advice and when he thought himself a fool for having followed it.

The Brigadier General, at whose office in a Quonset hut in England the entire action of "Command Decision" takes place, is familiar with these torments. The losses sustained by the heavy bombers under his command have been shocking. But,

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though to Washington and at first to the audience, the Brigadier seems a deliberate butcher, he has had no other choice than to send his planes deep into Germany, without the escort of friendly fighters, on missions suicidal in their danger. He has loathed doing what he has felt he must do. Yet he has done it because of his fierce awareness of the need to destroy some German jet-plane factories which, if allowed to get into production, would cost the Allies their air supremacy. The Brigadier does not perform his plain and ugly duty unimpeded. Washington is heavily upon his neck in the persons of two visiting Congressmen and a major general with his staff straight from combat duty in the Pentagon.

From such materials Mr. Haines has written a script which, as acted and staged, is by all odds the most effective drama so far to have come out of this war. As playwriting, it may have its jagged and routine moments; as produced, it is theatre of an exceptionally compelling kind. Although Mr. Haines's dialogue cannot claim the pungency of Harry Brown's "A Sound of Hunting," his drama has a drive, a novelty, and an authenticity which are irresistible. Moreover, it comes to grips with an idea and states that idea arrestingly. It not only deals with bombers; it drops some high explosives of its own.

Anyone who had ever spent a week end with the young pilots at a Bomber Command in Britain, attended a briefing, and waited through an endless day, scanning the skies for the return of fewer planes than had taken off in the early morning mists, cannot help being aware of the validity of "Command Decision." Mr. Haines is as full of his subject as a man would be who had served with the Eighth Air Force in England. He sees beyond all the vulgar ballyhoo of publicity, the shameless bootlicking of superiors, and the contemptible meannesses of politics. He faces without flinching and on a high level the costly and relentless facts of combat.

Mr. Haines may draw a Southern Congressman who outdoes in his absurdities the *Congressional Record* on its least inspired pages. At his climaxes he may write speeches longer than the lungs of actors are normally adjusted to. He may permit his plot to take turns which, however humanly true, can be anticipated theatrically. But his mind is alive with ideas, his point of view original, his thinking vigorous. He knows his locale and his soldiers, high and low.

"Mary Ellen grows so fast I can hardly keep her in brooms."

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He also understands the usually forgotten agonies which go with being a commanding officer.

Unlike Mr. Brown in "A Sound of Hunting," Mr. Haines can even write about a war correspondent and keep him human. He makes fortunate use, too, of withheld knowledge, allowing us to misjudge the Brigadier as a butcher and the Major General as a fuddy-duddy before we come to know them for what they are.

The virtues of his writing are enhanced in the admirable production Kermit Bloomgarden has given "Command Decision." John O'Shaughnessy's direction fits the play like a well-cut uniform. Jo Mielziner's setting is no less complete in its rightness. So unerring is Mr. Mielziner's sense of scale and so true his eye for details that he has contrived to blow up a Quonset hut until it fills a proscenium without seeming to be distended at all.

Men without women may suffer on more than desert islands. But men appearing in an all-male cast have a way of being as much at ease as they are when, after dinner, the ladies have left the dining room. The performances in "Command Decision" gain because the actors do not have to interrupt their military duties to strut as so many khaki Romeos. They are free to focus their attention on the grim business at hand; to behave and think as men—even as men sporting stars on their shoulders—do, when they are alone with other men.

As the harassed brigadier, Paul Kelly gives a memorable performance. Inwardly he is possessed by the Furies; outwardly he is as male as a stag at bay. He is hard-driven, thin-lipped, resolute. His audience is as much under his command as are his crews. As the Pentagon fuss-budget who outranks him, Jay Fassett is, in type at any rate, a perfect foil. But until he has become certain of his lines and has acquired more drive in the playing of his bigger scenes, he cannot help creating unfortunate air-pockets in an otherwise smooth-running production.

It is impossible to give proper credit to all the players contributing to the vitality of "Command Decision." Some inadequate mention, however, must be made of James Whitmore as an uproarious, deadpan sergeant; of Paul McGrath as the brigadier who succeeds Mr. Kelly; of Stephen Elliott as the colonel who loses his life; of Lewis Martin as an intelligence officer; and of James Holden as a young Southern pilot whose speech is heavy with honeysuckle.

Of course, I am only guessing. Still, I am fairly confident that Willie and Joe might take a less tarnished view of Brass Hats if only they could be confronted with "Command Decision." It would not ask them to abandon wholesale their old distaste for those at headquarters. Yet it seems certain that they might (remembering them, I dare not say they *would)* leave Mr. Haines's play with a new awareness of the problems which must disturb the sleep and haunt the consciences of the High Command.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

FRASER YOUNG'S
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A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 227 will be found in the next issue.

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POLITICAL TECHNIQUES

(*Continued from page* 11)

Stimson and told the Secretary of War he did not know how he had initialed that particular language in the Quebec agreement. It must have been done, he said, without much thought." Yet this decision, taken "without much thought," at a time when the United States literally had no policy on Germany, is still overshadowing negotiations for a German peace treaty.

Perhaps the strongest impression that emerges from reading Mr. Byrnes's book is that the United States, although indubitably animated by the best intentions, entered into negotiations with Russia (as well as other countries), the stakes of which were no less than the peace of the world, not only with little information about the historic aims, whether legitimate or illegitimate, of its partners in the war, but with what can only be described as a frivolous attitude toward issues like those of Germany, Poland, China, Korea, the Balkans, and Japan. Even after two world wars and a great depression, these issues, which, as Stalin pointed out in the case of Poland, are matters of life and death for other nations, were still apparently remote from the point of view of the United States. Typical of this attitude is Mr. Byrnes's own remark about Stalin's demand for bases in the Dardanelles, that this demand (which Russia had been trying to fulfill for two centuries) was "unrealistic" because air warfare had made bases obsolete—although a glance at the map would show that the United States and Britain are equally "unrealistic."

Mr. Byrnes makes perfectly plain that the Russians were extraordinarily difficult to negotiate with. He repeatedly points out that Molotov, whose patience in finding new and still newer obstacles in the way of a settlement, he says, marked him as a "lineal descendant" of Job, tried his nerves and that of representatives of other countries beyond the breaking point—although Mr. Byrnes says that Stalin "is a very likable person." After infinitely complex and frustrating conferences in London, Moscow, Paris, and New York, Mr. Byrnes has regretfully come to the conclusion that the Russians do not want to make a peace settlement now, and suggests the course the United States should follow in case the November Council of Foreign Ministers ends in failure.

But making all possible allowances for the ambitions, intransigeance, aggressiveness, and stubbornness of the Russians, one cannot but ask whether greater progress might not have been accomplished if, at the end of the war, the United States had had a clear idea of what it wanted, of what other countries would seek to achieve as a result of the common victory, and of the points on which this country intended to yield or hold firm. Mr. Byrnes, other American negotiators, and the American people have had to learn the hard way that a great power cannot merely react to the policies of other nations; it must initiate policies, it must understand the policies of other nations, and it must seek to discover possible areas of agreement. If one dare assume that 1947 is not yet the zero hour, and that further possibilities of peaceful settlement lie ahead, the lessons Mr. Byrnes has now so honestly shared with his fellow citizens should bear rich fruit in terms of constructive American action in world affairs.

Vera Micheles Dean is research director of the Foreign Policy Association and author of last winter's "Russia—Menace or Promise."

Trainwrecked Soldiers

By John Frederick Nims

DEATH, that is small respecter of distinction,
Season or fitness, in an instant these
Tan casual heroes, floral with citation,
Scattered and flung for blocks over the track
In lewd ridiculous poses, red and black.

These had outfaced him in the echoing valleys;
Thwarted like men of stone incredible fire;
Like dancers had evaded the snub bayonet;
Had ridden ocean or precipitous air.
Death turned his face aside, seemed not to see;
His unconcern made boyish melodrama
Of all the sergeant threatened, corporal bore,
Or captain shouted on the withering shore.

He watched the newsreel general on their blouses
Pinning the motley segments of renown;
Stood patient at the cots of wounded
Where metal pruned and comas hung;
Nodded to hear their plans: one with a child
His arms had never held, one with a bride,
One with a mere kid's longing for the gang
In green and ticking poolroom bluff with beer.
All these he herded through sargasso of mines
Back to the native field and Sunday steeple
Where only the russet hunters late in fall
Nitre the frosty heaven with abrupt smoke.
There he arose full-height; suddenly spoke.

Spoke, and the four dimensions rocked and shattered:
Rearing, the olive pullmans spun like tops;
Corridor bent to stairway and shot up;
Window, green pastoral lately, turned grenade;
The very walls were scissor and cut flesh.
The doors, the drinking-fount, the studded trunk
Ruptured like booby-traps, a German's joke.
Captain and sergeant tumbled—wholly void
Their fortitude, muscle, and khaki fame,
Like rules intended for another game.

Then death, the enormous insolence effected,
The *tour de force* pat and precisely timed,
Resumes his usual idiom, less florid:
A thousand men are broken at Cologne;
Elderly salesman falters on the landing;
Girl Slain in Park, Plane Overdue, Tots Drown.
But we who walk this track, who read, or see
In a dark room the shaggy films of wreck—
What do the carrion bent like letters spell
More than the old *sententiae* of chance?—
Greek easier (αἶλινον αἶλινον) than this fact.
You lie wry X, poor men, or empty O,
Crux in a savage tongue none of us know.

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(*Continued from page 9*)

without a better understanding and appreciation of certain basic principles. It was mainly for want of such understanding that every major government (except the British Isles), including those with the highest degree of education, has been torn by internal war within the last one hundred and fifty years. As for economic panaceas as the certain way out of war, we would be deluding ourselves if we believed that wealth of itself makes men or nations happy; and unhappy men or nations are not the raw material out of which permanent peace is made.

Actually, the asumption that man acts only from rational motives is an arrogant piece of vanity akin to the former belief that the earth was the center of the universe. We act in fits of anger; we pursue vengeance which avails us nothing; when tortured by frustrations or anxieties, we are constantly performing acts which we "know" will increase our unhappiness, and we do not understand why we are impelled to perform them.

It is no use trying to dismiss these acts as temporary aberrations. They are part of the acts which set family against family, group against group, nation against nation. They are part of the reality with which we have to deal. Any attempt to meet reality without taking them into account is another attempt, to quote Whitehead on a different level, "to bifurcate the seamless coat of the universe."

The Uses of Uncertainty

At first blush it would seem that so long as this is true, there is no way out. Since man is frequently dominated by his irrational behavior, and since we are not likely to change that behavior short of a biological mutation—about which we know very little—it begins to look as though we have drawn a picture of hopeless uncertainty.

But another analogy to the way science deals with problems in which there is an important irrational factor may be useful at this point.

Classical physics proceeded upon the belief that the "laws of nature" were fixed, absolute and invariable. If man could discover how the molecules of any element behaved in a specified situation, he could safely assume that *every* molecule behaved that way. Around the turn of the century this belief began to break down and is completely disregarded today in many, if not most, situations.

For example, in dealing with elec-

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trons, the behavior of any single electron may be assumed to be quite unpredictable. It is necessary to apply a "statistical average" to several billion electrons before anything like a law of behavior can be safely assumed. Indeed, Heisenberg, in his celebrated law of indeterminacy, postulated that in seeking knowledge of phenomena such as an electron's behavior, two sets of data were necessary, and the more you knew at any one time about one set, the less you could know about the other. You could, therefore, compute the speed of an electron at any instant with reasonable accuracy, but if you did, you could not at the same instant, compute its position, and *vice versa.*

Eddington expressed the implications of this law as follows: We have a universe which is, at any time, exactly half knowable, and we may choose which half we may set about knowing.

To the layman it would seem that this must have put the physicists into a state of helpless bewilderment.

But the interjection of these uncertainties in no way discouraged the physical researchers. On the contrary, it enabled them to produce greater results than ever, culminating in the atomic energy which may save or destroy us. Therefore, the physical researchers need not be discouraged by the need to take into account the factor of irrational uncertainty. It may begin to solve their problems. Once having admitted that the behavior of each individual is completely unpredictable, we may find that the behavior of two billion people is subject to quite workable rules.

A Hypothetical Theory

By way of illustration, I should like to set forth a hypothetical theory of the type which might result from the researches of a man who started without fixed assumptions, such as the assumption that people act rationally, or that they act only from economic motives, or that the mass of people do not desire war. I should like to make it plain that I know of no established psychologist who holds such a theory as the one set forth below, nor do I know of sufficient evidence to support it. It is set forth merely in the hopes of making clear what the psychical researcher *might* come out with.

We know that as soon as people are born they act. Furthermore, it is their actions which cause the troubles of the world, including war. It also seems clear that people act to accomplish some purpose. We do not yet know what impels them to act—but I think we can safely assume that they are impelled by rational motives, emotional motives, and a combination of the two which sometimes results in what we call irrational motives.

We also know that one of our dominant purposes is to bring ourselves into a state of pleasure. (Let us avoid quibbling over the meaning of the word "pleasure"; most of us know what a state of pleasure means to us.) Freud has pointed out that the highest degree of pleasure comes from the release of tension. The orgasm is the stock example, but there are plenty of others. It seems reasonable, therefore, to assume that within all of us there is a drive to create tension in order that we may experience pleasure from its release.

Unfortunately, since we are driven by irrational as well as rational factors, we tend to create tensions which we find it impossible to release harmlessly; and it also appears that the more intelligent we become, the more complicated are the tensions which we create for ourselves. (If you have any doubts on this score, a list of the powerful people seeking psychiatric help would go far toward dispelling those doubts.) These tensions spread from person to person, from small group to small group, and from large groups such as a nation to another nation. When they have become sufficiently acute, there seem to be only two ways of releasing them. One is an orgy of sentimentality and the other is a fight, which often includes a large dose of sentimentality.

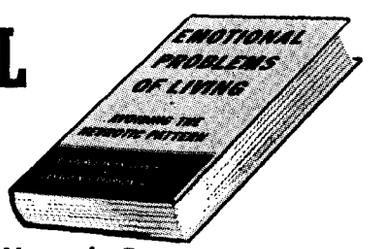
Anybody who has worked within a large organization will have evidence of the foregoing. No matter how bitter the feelings between members of the group, they will indulge in a great sentimental celebration of, let us say, the founding of the firm or the completion of a long term of service. Presents will be bestowed and speeches of sweetness and light will flow. Again, no matter how bitter the internal strife, let some other organization presume to attack, and unanimity against the enemy will spring up immediately.

I think it can hardly be doubted that for many people (and many more than care to admit it), war is a release from tensions which have become unbearable. Despite the dangers and hardships, many men and women are happier and more secure during an armed conflict than they are in civil life. Any army physician will confirm this fact.

It might seem that if tension can only be released by war, we are irrevocably doomed. However, people, acting on a wide enough scale, have found innumerable ways of creating high tension which they can release. I think it might be argued that the

How to avoid destructive emotional conflicts

EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS OF LIVING



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inherently peaceful nature of the 140,000,000 Americans is due in large part to this. In much of our business structure, outside of the very top and the very bottom, competition is a series of minor crises which neither make nor break one. The tremendous absorption in sport is another factor. Both in playing and watching sport, people build themselves into a state of high tension which is released quite harmlessly and automatically by the ending of the game. As for sentimentality, Hollywood and the radio pour it out to an audience of millions day after day and night after night. It is the fashion of most intellectuals to decry utterly our current motion picture and radio fare; yet it may be that it has an important place in the present scheme of things.

A Plea for Help

I should like to stress again that the foregoing is merely set out as an illustration, and, like all illustrations, gives a superficial picture of the matter. Actually, the psychical researchers are attacking the problem, not by spinning theories, but by profound and scientific methods. They are slowly and patiently assembling evidence from which they can discover what really does impel men and women to act; how men and women perceive the external world; how aggressive impulses are nurtured and controlled; what factors really make it possible for a child to turn into a mature adult.

I have no doubts that eventually these unsung people will find enough answers to give the world real hope of controlling man's mania for destruction. Whether they will find the answers in time to avert another disastrous war is more doubtful. The chance would be enormously increased if they had sufficient financial support, for unlike Newton, Gibbs, and Einstein, these people are working in a field where research could use vast sums of money. Speaking from personal experience, I can confidently assert that it is more difficult to obtain funds for this type of research than for any other.

Probably this is due to our tremendous concentration on material things. We are brought up to believe that a new physical gadget has value; very few of us understand the value of a principle. An inventor seeking funds to develop a new dynamo has a fair chance of getting them; but even the custodian of eleemosynary funds hesitates to invest half a million dollars in a man who might come out with only a formula such as the following: The irrational factors in men and women increase in direct proportion to their mania for power.

I am afraid that most of us would feel we had gotten little value for our money if the only result were such a formula. Yet assume for one moment that it could be proved, and came to be believed as implicitly as Newton's formula dealing with the attraction of physical bodies. I say *believed,* rather than understood, for very few people today could even state Newton's formula. Try it and see. Yet if an architect told you that he proposed to build your house in defiance of Newton's law of gravitation, you would quickly get another architect and probably suggest that the first one needed psychiatric aid.

Similarly, if all people believed implicitly that uncontrolled power produced irrational behavior in a man or woman who achieved such power, we would do our utmost to see that the architects of world government and economic plenty did not omit sufficient checks and balances to prevent our being carried to destruction by the irrational. Then we might really make a start toward world peace.

The principles will be found someday. Let us hope they will be found soon enough.

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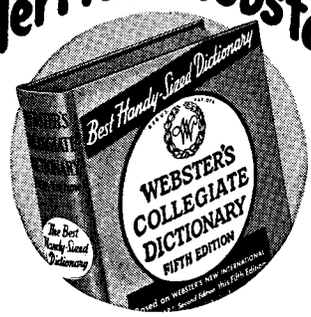

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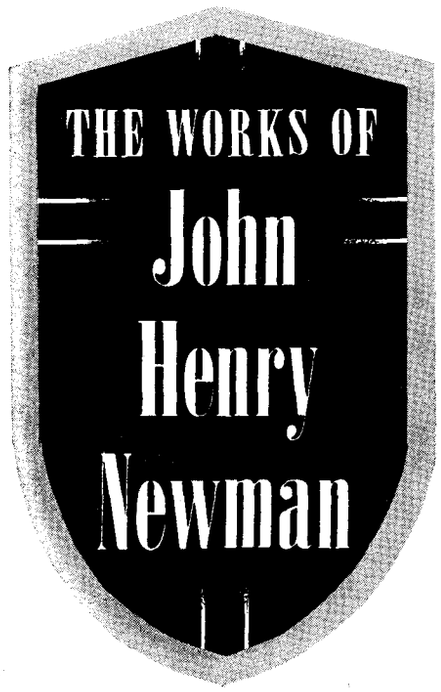

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THE WORLD
(*Continued from page 17*)

In the part of the book here presented, dealing with "communist morality," is education for a grim society, for life without encouragement of self-expression, for solidarity, not for personal security and built upon satisfaction of needs or the gratification of normal human wants. It is education for the suppression of all drives for satisfaction which are not satisfactory to the hierarchy of the Motherland, its Red Army, its Communist Party, and its leader.

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High-Noon Children

CHINA AWAKE. By Robert Payne. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1947. 424 pp. $4.

Reviewed by GORDDEN LINK

"CHINA AWAKE" takes its name from the proposed title of a liberal paper at Lienta, wartime campus of Peking, Tsinghua, and Nankai universities. Holding classes in fifty cowsheds, living in hovels, the half-starved faculties burned themselves out making their complex of institutions the bulwark of democracy in the National Government. And the students were murdered by the generalissimo's troops. The book is the diary of a young British instructor in English during the last two years of his five-year residence in China.

Robert Payne might easily have made this into two books of journalistic observation: one covering the Kuomintang and its curious fear of democracy; the other reporting the discovery that the Chinese Communists are fighting for a combination of democracy and capitalism. Then he would have two more books like "The Revolt of Asia" in which he waved the club of urgent brotherhood over the Western world. But in "China Awake" he offers his journal, perhaps hoping it gives, as he says diaries do in his discussion of literary forms, "arrangement and shadow to the naked impressions of life seen daily."

Seeing life daily in China convinces Payne that nationalism is being achieved, but not through the efforts of the Kuomintang or the Communists. The force in China has been and will be the farm boys. When peace comes, the Chinese people rising from their long sleep will constitute the greatest force in the world. But the outstanding obstacle to peace in Chiang Kai-shek, whose virtues Payne describes with the sad parentheses that they are no longer the ones required.

Describing a journey to Red China, Payne sketches the sharpest pictures that have been made of the Communist leaders and their hopes. He was impressed by the Communists. They were as afraid of Russian intervention as of American intervention; they were nationalists with greater faith in China than in any other country. They had a quality rarely seen in Chungking. But his ultimate hope for China is that the best men of all parties may take control.

Meanwhile there is terror and a darkness of the spirit. Payne used to explain the industry of the Chinese, their tireless enjoyment of life, their delight in human relations, their fixation upon the family as the fountainhead of living. It is their love of the sun. When they paint, there are no shadows—everything is seen at high noon. Life is simple in China, obeying the seasons and refusing obedience to all else. But the scholars who bring light now are persecuted and killed. Free speech is at the mercy of the soldiers. And China is ruled by a man with the training of second-grade Japanese private. "O God," exclaimed Wen Yi-tuo, long before his assassination by Kuomintang agents, "if only the government had been to school!" And considering "The Dark Night," an essay written by Lu Hsun before he died, Payne concludes that "the dark night remains, though it is lit with lightning."

In the Communist stronghold, Ai Ching, the Chinese Whitman, explained that "one writes propaganda for the same reason that the Christian painters painted Madonnas." Robert Payne apparently writes his journal for this reason, too. There is much here for the sensitive reader who is less interested in the politics of China than in the essential experience of man. But "China Awake" is required reading for anyone who wishes insight into both the Kuomintang, which seems to know little of American democracy, and Chinese communism, which seems to have little in common with Soviet Russia.

Gordden Link, who met many people described by Robert Payne while serving in China, is historian and editorial director of General MacArthur's eight-volume engineer history.

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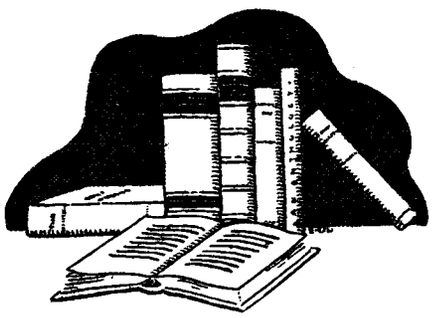
AMERICANA

(*Continued from page 14*)

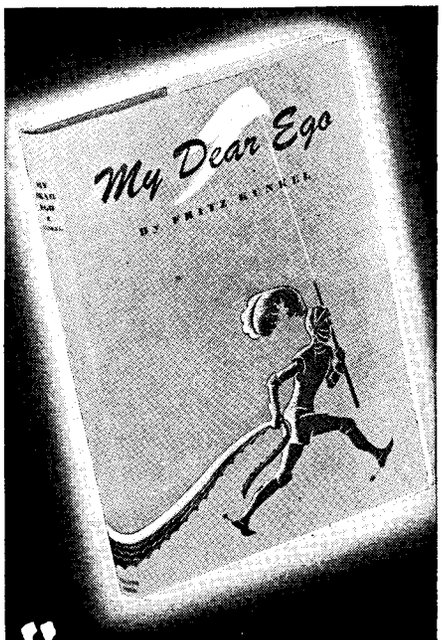
hardbitten realism in others, and he let himself fall at first into rascally hands. As for Nicolay and Hay, they wrote a ten-volume work which, still a storehouse of facts for all students, was sadly maimed and distorted by three circumstances. They thought that, being authorized biographers, they had to be defense attorneys for everything Lincoln did, and to give their massive work a general tone of eulogy; they mingled far too much history with their biography; and they let themselves be overawed at various points by the watchful Robert T. Lincoln. Mr. Thomas gives some interesting illustrations of the way in which Robert edited parts of the manuscript.

The reminiscent writers (including H. C. Whitney, who invented a whole



speech of Lincoln's) and the official biographers having had their say, the road was clear for investigators of broader view and more rigorous scholarship. Miss Tarbell led the way with a book which embodied thorough research. Lord Charnwood followed with a study which, though frankly devoid of new factual material, was so full of sound judgments and so beautifully executed that it has become a standard work. Then came the prolific W. E. Barton, who, as Mr. Thomas says, was in various matters a shrew historical detective. Finally, the treatment of Lincoln's life culminated (for the present) in three works of massive research, those of Beveridge, Randall, and Sandburg, each so original that it is strikingly dissimilar from its fellows, and each indispensable for a study of the man and his times.

For a highly specialized subject, Mr. Thomas's book is both entertaining and rewarding. He does not give as firm and incisive an appraisal of the major works as he might have done. But he has traced an interesting process of change in the methods and ideals of American biographical writing 1865-1947; and his study of the able, honest, wayward, undisciplined Herndon in particular, is unforgettable.



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IN THE PARLOR

A LADY holds reception before a long journey,
Friends have been in and out these many hours;
Drooped eyelids, a fixed smile, betray fatigue. How pale she is!
Her costume, oyster chiffon with pink flowers.

And she reclines as they used at salons, but unlike a salon,
Here is no clasping nor kissing of hands; a curious story
Raconteur tells of many mansions and green pastures,
White garments, blood of the Lamb, stars differing in glory.

How strange! Unobserved, she is putting off her finery
And what seems to have been a waxen mask. Her escort's warning
She alone hears, but faintly now that company
Deaf to her "I'll be seeing you on Resurrection Morning!"

ANNE YOUNG.

* * *

I am always glad to hear from Miriam Allen deFord, who writes from San Francisco:

> I hope somebody can find the author of that sonnet for Mrs. London. Mr. Lane wrote me about it also, and I searched every likely author, from Sterling to Clark Ashton Smith and Richard Realf, but couldn't find it. I am beginning to wonder if London didn't write it himself!
>
> I think, *pace* Mrs. Colum, that a few people—especially here in San Francisco—do still read Sterling. He has fine lines, in "The Testimony of the Suns" as well as in "A Wine of Wizardy" and elsewhere. One of his sonnets, "In Excelsis," has always seemed to me superb; it contains lines like "the star-usurping battlements of night," and "tumult of the empire-forging sea." Could anything be finer than "seas that flash on alien eyes // The riven sunlight of Altair"?* Sterling was very uneven, and his kind of poetry has gone out of fashion, but it will come into fashion again.
>
> He himself was more interesting than his poems, and yet very little has been written about him—largely because of the provincialism of Eastern publishers about anything or anyone not connected with New York. A few years ago I knew a man who was writing a full-length biography of Sterling, but so far as I know he never got it published. About the only extended biographical and critical notice outside of periodicals with which I am acquainted is my own chapter on Sterling in "They Were San Franciscans"—which, incidentally, Caxton has just brought out in a new and revised (enlarged) edition.
>
> To return to the sonnet, it is derivative and trite, but it seems to me to be just the kind of imitative poem that a man who admired Sterling and was essentially unpoetic in his own talent might write. I'm almost willing to bet that Jack London was the author of it.

* "*Testimony of the Suns.*"

* * *

AUTUMN SONNET

The last few cornstalks in these fields go down
Before the sickles of a dying season.
The faded spears of grass are dark and brown
On dark slopes ravaged past all scope of reason.
Above dark, lonely hills the skies are graying.
Like fleeing foxes now, the last red leaves
Are harried down bleak heavens by the baying
Hounds of the wind; and these last scraggly sheaves
Lean with the gale. The gambling fall has lost
These fields which winter's won, and plans to freeze.
Already she has set the mole-like frost
Working across the cornfield towards the trees
Which dare to brave the cold, which still are staying—
But even they raise scrawny arms in praying.

E. V. GRIFFITH.

* * *

Always a great admirer of the fighting Quaker poet—how different from a far later American political figure known, after World War I, as "the quaking fighter"!—I was delighted the other day when some kind friends drove my wife and myself, by way of Andover, Mass., to Haverhill whither three hundred years ago (1647) moved the original Thomas Whittier (then a young man of twenty-seven of enormous physique, with unusual strength both of body and of mind). They say he weighed in his prime over three hundred pounds! He was a seventeenth-century Englishman of vast proportions. At that time Haverhill had been a settlement for but seven years. Thomas fathered ten children, built the Whittier homestead in 1688 (the year when William of Orange landed in England and James II fled to France), and died in 1696. Two Josephs and a John succeeded him, and the last-named had four children of whom our poet was one, born in 1807. He never married.

We turned off the Amesbury road and were soon at the homestead, which is built around an enormous chimney supplying a great fireplace and hearth to the main room. There is now a second story where once was a slanting roof. John Greenleaf Whittier was born in a room adjoining. He had a younger sister, Elizabeth, who also never married; and their relationship, with their community of literary interests, has been compared to that of Charles and Mary Lamb. The old doorless barn and grist-mill are gone, but the front of the large barn across the road from the house is as it was when built in 1821 and as described in "Snow-Bound." We saw the doorstone on which sat "The Barefoot Boy," the well-sweep, and some beehives beyond that reminded me of "the stepping-stones in the shallow brook," which still trickles through the fern. "And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard, and the white horns tossing above the wall"—were veritably there, across the road; and "the beehives ranged in the sun," which my friend the artist was busily sketching. It was not now "the June sun warm," but, in spite of the cars constantly passing on the highway nearby, the principal features of the place were extraordinarily as the poet must have known them in his youth. An old lady showed us around. The "chore-girl" did not still sing "to the bees stealing out and in," or tell them that "Mistress Mary is dead and gone." But the mortal part of a great poet and humanitarian was gone, though a pair of his old boots still stood by the hearth, and his uncle's bull's-eye watch hung above it. Yet I felt that the voice that chanted at the end of our Civil War the great chant of emancipation for the Negro, the stirring "Laus Deo!"—that that voice and that spirit still inhabited the scene.

We went on to Amesbury to the house Whittier bought in 1836 after selling the farm. It was then a one-story cottage; but the front, at least, is now of two stories. Downstairs was the room where most of his best work, including "Snow-Bound," was written; upstairs was his small bedroom with narrow bed and Franklin stove. We did not linger. We drove on to Newburyport, passing there the house of Lord Timothy Dexter with the golden eagle on top. Another extraordinary New England character, as different from Whittier as chalk from cheese!

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
POLITICS IS MURDER *Edwin Lanham* (Harcourt, Brace: $2.50)	Manhattan councilman slain with Samurai sword in office. City Hall reporter and Homicide Squad lieut. follow different trails to same end.	Political intrigue, mysterious stuffed cat, lovely girl suspect, steadily simmering action, likable sleuths, all add up to something very special.	First-rate
TO KEEP OR KILL *Wilson Tucker* (Rinehart: $2)	"Confidential investigator" sees rejected client destroyed in auto-bomb blast. C. I. suspects mysterious redhead and trails her with horrific results.	Begins well, dashes lustily through sequence of exciting and piquant scenes—including one in sewer — but runs amok at end.	Disappointing
MURDER GETS AROUND *Robert Sidney Bowen* (Crown: $2)	Brawl at N. Y. party introduces private 'tec to battling ex-French Underground members, who garrot each other 'til 'tec discovers all.	Fast-paced item with adroitly mingled moments of merriment and horror. Unquenchable sleuth and peppery girl-friend an engaging pair.	Zippy
CRY MURDER *William MacLeod Raine* (Phoenix: $2)	Stabbing of blackmailing promoter in bachelor apt. leads to another death. Police Capt. Railstone does some shrewd detecting.	All ingredients of good mystery present, but surprisingly sketchy handling and lugged-in-for-shock-effect climax rather spoil it.	Below par
WALK IN SHADOW *Julius Fast* (Rinehart: $2.50)	Letter from dead friend's widow impels young New Yorker to avenge "blood-brother's" possible murder. He does—with harrowing aftermath.	Penniless protagonist's efforts to exist and keep jump ahead of pursuing police realistically portrayed. Neurotic niches of characters pitilessly explored.	Grim
MARY ROBERTS RINEHART'S MYSTERY BOOK *Mary Roberts Rinehart* (Rinehart: $3)	Omnibus volume of "Circular Staircase," "Man in Lower Ten," and "Case of Jenny Brice," re-edited by author.	Stories may be brand new to many current readers (Original Pub. Dates — 1908, 1909, 1913) and they still can thrill.	Worth reading —again
A WILL IN THE WAY *Miles Burton* (Crime Club: $2)	Suspicious death-fall of doped English matron investigated from all angles by Insp. Arnold and Desmond Merrion with quite unexpected results.	Dogged Scotland Yarder and mercurial helper turn in one of their better cases. Atmosphere, action (rather subdued), and characters all okay.	Petter-than-average-British
BURY ME DEEP *Harold Q. Masur* (Simon & Schuster: $2.50)	Death, in taxi, of unknown damsel found in his apt. by N.Y. lawyer, starts homicidal hurricane which sleuthing attorney barely escapes.	Explosive action from surprising first page to startling solution — which involves one of riskiest bits of detecting yet recorded.	Good tough-'un
THE DARK DEVICE *Hannah Lees* (Harper's: $2.50)	Girl skating-star with patricidal notions, and ultra-possessive pa, visits psychiatrist Storm, who uncovers long-past crime and prevents another.	Soundest of current crop of mysteries with psychiatric basis. Psychpatter occasionally burdensome but doesn't noticeably retard moving and effective story.	Very Good
TOO MANY WOMEN *Rex Stout* (Viking: $2.50)	Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin, stuck with case without clue and two corpses, try risky experiment and flush well-protected killer.	Archie's didoes in officeful of devastating dames diverting; Nero's sedentary sleuthing admirable—but tale lacks crispness and action of some predecessors.	Slightly thin Stout

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 709

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

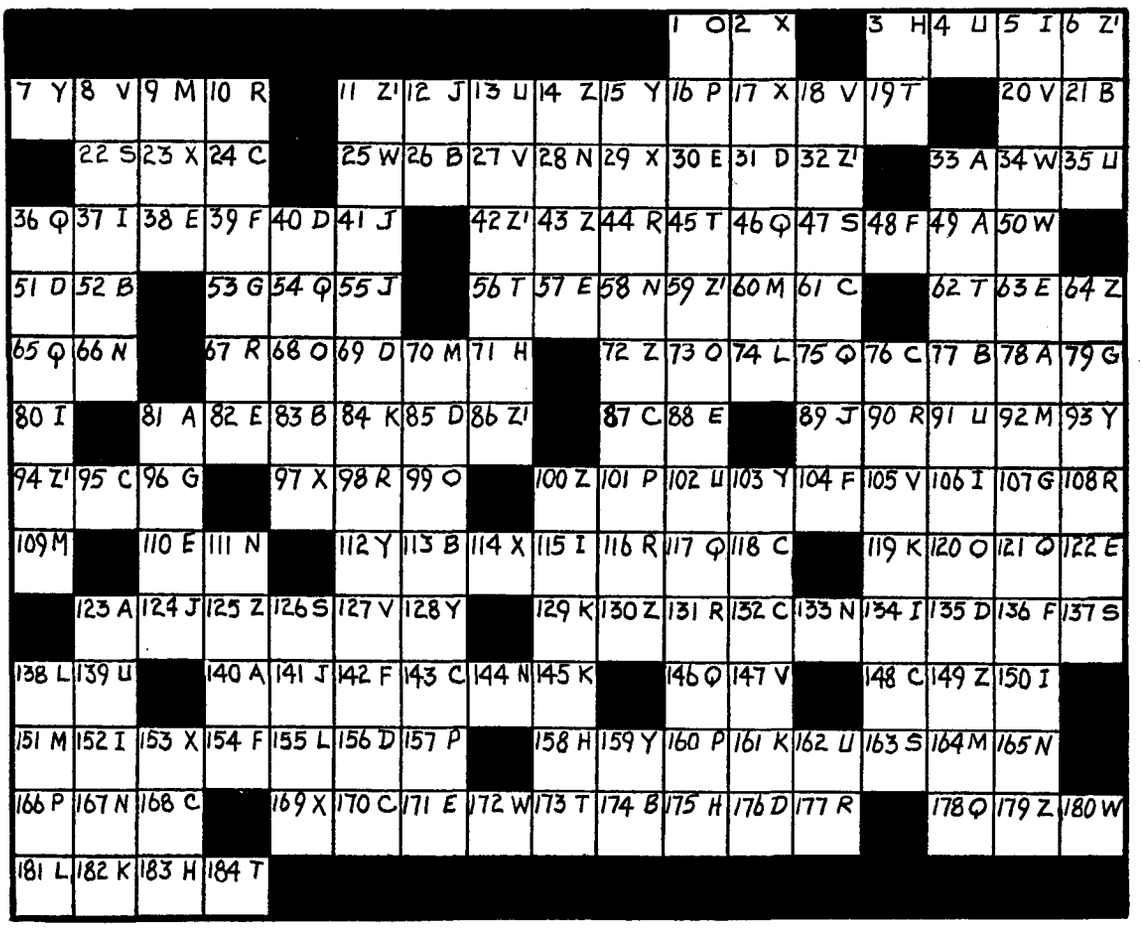
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Pertaining to slow waste of animal tissue, as in consumption.	49 123 33 81 140 78
B. One of the four demons ruling the universe (Medieval demonology).	174 113 83 77 26 52 21
C. To crackle, as salt when heated.	61 24 95 168 170 132 87 148 118 76 143
D. The howling monkey.	31 176 69 135 156 51 85 40
E. Any composition in incongruously mingled languages.	122 171 38 57 82 110 88 63 30
F. American painter (1755-1828; portraits of Washington).	142 48 154 136 104 39
G. Any small pointed processes, such as those which terminate spikelets of barley, etc. (Bot.).	79 53 107 96
H. Cast sneering reproaches.	71 158 175 3 183
I. A confidential or bosom friend (2 wds.; Latin).	37 80 134 150 115 106 5 152
J. Known in English history as "The Mad Cavalier."	41 124 89 12 55 141
K. Timely warning of an approaching arrest, etc. (Comp.).	161 84 129 182 145 119
L. Any place or state of torture, anguish, etc.	181 138 74 155
M. Common to both sexes; effeminate.	60 151 92 164 109 70 9
N. A façade (Arch.).	111 28 167 58 165 144 133 66
O. Card game of Spanish origin, popular in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.	73 68 1 99 120
P. Shallow or rocky places in a stream forming fords or rapids (U.S.).	157 101 166 16 160
Q. Abnormality of vision in which objects appear smaller than they are (Med.).	178 146 117 36 121 46 65 75 54
R. A hermit; recluse.	67 10 108 98 90 131 116 44 177
S. Not too much (musical direction; It.).	137 47 163 22 126
T. Derives by reasoning or implication.	45 19 62 173 56 184
U. Italian violinist and composer of concerti (1680?-1743).	102 162 13 35 91 139 4
V. Originated or formed on the surface of the earth; said of rocks (Geol.).	18 127 20 105 8 147 27
W. Type of small light vessel built for pleasure (Naut.).	50 25 172 34 180
X. An air plant (Bot.).	114 169 29 153 23 2 97 17
Y. One of the Dionne Quints.	112 159 15 128 93 7 103
Z. To chide; blame; censure.	64 179 72 125 130 149 14 43 100
Z'. Serpentine; venomous.	86 32 42 59 94 11 6

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 26 of this issue.

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Saturday Review

OF RECORDINGS

for NOVEMBER, 1947

IMPRESSIONS

IN an otherwise well-composed booklet for the Columbia issue of "Hansel and Gretel," there is one section that catches the eye, irritates it like a small piece of coal dust, and eventually calls for some therapeutic treatment. It occurs in a page devoted to the history of the Metropolitan Opera (with whose cooperation the recording was made) and reads:

> Its roster down through the years has included the names of the greatest of all singers. Adelina Patti, Lilli Lehmann, Enrico Caruso, Marcella Sembrich, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Jean and Eduard de Reszke, John McCormack, Claudia Muzio, Lily Pons, Helen Traubel, Ezio Pinza, Lotte Lehmann, Martial Singher, Risë Stevens, Torsten Ralf, Raoul Jobin, Charles Kullman, Bidú Sayao, Jennie Tourel — these are only a few of the consummate vocalists who have sung, etc.

Analysis of the exhibit shows three things: 1) It is a list of singers; 2) it is a list of singers notable for its exclusiveness rather than its inclusiveness; 3) it is a list which includes thirteen living singers, and nine who are dead. A likely enough group, you might say, even if rather generously loaded with those of the present—by no means the glory of the Metropolitan's history—at the expense of the past.

A Wagnerian tenor is mentioned, but it is not Melchior, who has been famous at the Met and elsewhere for a mere twenty years; a tenor of the Italian repertory is mentioned, but it is not Jan Peerce, who has tickled many a receptive ear, or the recent Ferruccio Tagliavini.

On final analysis, the list shows a rather striking division between the quick and the dead. The latter are cited without regard to recording affiliation; but all of the former are presently recording for Columbia (with the exception of Lotte Lehmann, who has recently reverted to Victor after compiling a considerable Columbia catalogue). Those who order such things have had the grace to recognize that Caruso and the De Reszkes, Sembrich and Schumann-Heink had a fair share of influence on the history of the Metropolitan; but since Caruso's death, they have ignored *all* who have had the bad manners to record exclusively with a rival firm.

This would be expectable practice in commercial copy, but in a sketch which purports to be historical, it is no flattery of the reader's intelligence. It ends by being mere house organ "publicity."

It suggests, all too closely, the kind of behavior attributed to ostriches, and denied by naturalists on their behalf, but actually practised by radio networks, newspapers and the like; that is, if you don't mention a competitor or his chattel, nobody will know that they exist.

Columbia recently issued a recording of the Handel "Concerti Grossi" which was distinguished by the admirable notes of Emanuel Winternitz; many of its album "liners" have been soundly documented; this brochure for "Hansel and Gretel," which includes the text of the whole work, is also a commendable job. But to throw this kind of dust in the reader's eye is to leave the knowing ones with a single if paradoxical word for his reactions: it would have to be: "Eye-wash!"

IRVING KOLODIN,
Editor, SRL *Recordings*

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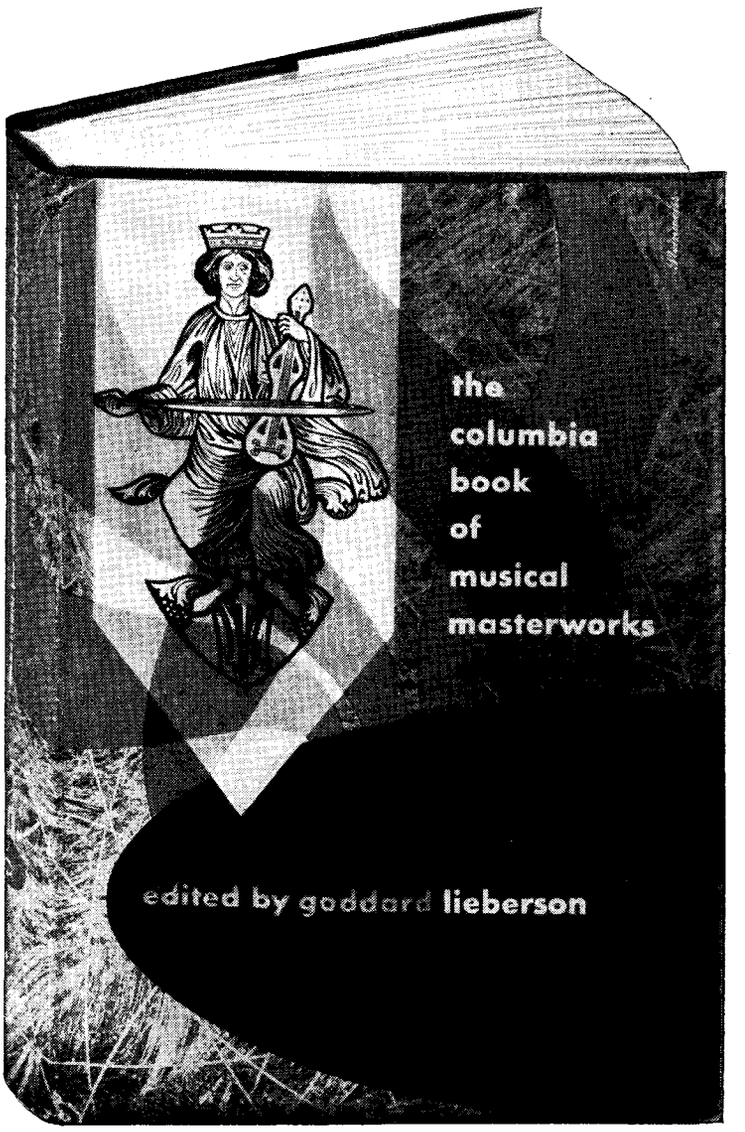

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The Saturday Review of Recordings

R. & H. Co.

By LEWIS NICHOLS

Richard Rodgers and his collaborator "have replaced the star system. . . .

. . . or Oscar Hammerstein 2nd [and his partner] have become stars themselves."

IN the alphabetical listing of attractions playing on the New York stage these days, it may be observed that the names of Rodgers and Hammerstein appear almost as often as the word "theatre." "Oklahoma!" and "Carousel" occur as regularly in a newspaper as "weather report"; but there are also "Annie Get Your Gun," "John Loves Mary," and "Happy Birthday," sponsored by the producing firm of Rodgers and Hammerstein. Now "Allegro" has come to join them, the third in a series of one-word titles that may eventually rival the Conradian sequence of "Youth," "Victory," "Nostromo," etc.

The cast of "Allegro" contains a good many worthy people, but none of them is too well known. Nevertheless, before the curtain had gone up on the first performance, contented box-office men had already counted more than half a million dollars in advance business. This was unquestionably a world's record, or at least a record for the world of Broadway, which is the only one that matters. It was more than a record. It was a personal tribute to Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein 2nd. The proof that theirs was the trade name luring thousands into line before the opening lies in the fact that it could have been nothing else. They have replaced the star system, or perhaps more exactly, they have become stars in themselves.

Conceding the reason for the tremendous interest of the theater-going public, the collaborators appreciated the compliment, but also found it frightening. A half-million purchase price is a good deal, sight unseen. After all, in their professional collaboration, Rodgers and Hammerstein have had only two previous musical plays and the picture "State Fair." And this time, they were undertaking a completely original collaboration, with no reliance on Lynn Riggs, Ferenc Molnar, or Phil Stong.

Understandably, then, the partners spent six months in preliminary discussion before putting anything on paper. They made an outline of the story, expanded it, decided where dances should go, where songs should go, and what kind of songs. When each step had been planned, Mr. Hammerstein retired to his desk and shortly began turning over words to Mr. Rodgers. The composer then added the notes in predetermined positions and styles—background music, solo, choral. Both men knew what they wished to say, as well as how they planned saying it.

The partners are leisurely, and they go slowly in the hope that what is set down will be both right and final. "Allegro" took them eighteen months as the calandar pages tear away, although in these months there were three major interruptions for activities as producers. And also on the road this fall is the revival of "Show Boat," for which the billing reads: "Rodgers and Hammerstein present."

They have no wish to be other than what they are, except that in the theatre they hope to grow professionally. Their statement of intentions, set forth by Mr. Rodgers, is simple. "I hope to write music for the theatre," he noted. "It is meant to be performed on the stage, before an audience, and in conjunction with the English language." Mr. Hammerstein's views are similar. As observed, their collaboration is painstaking, with everything plotted out in advance, everything clearly in view as though a musical play were the Empire State Building, Rodgers and Hammerstein its architects and builders.

WHILE the professional collaboration began with "Oklahoma!" the partnership goes a bit beyond that, if somewhat informally. History will record that Rodgers actually set his first Hammerstein lyric when he was still a student at Columbia. This occurred when Rodgers and the late Lorenz Hart submitted an entry for the 1920 varsity show. On the committee of judges was Mr. Hammerstein, some seven years older than his present partner. He had come equipped with a lyric of his own to test the abilities of the contenders, and, on invitation, it was set by Rodgers. Their collaboration might have gone further a year or two later when Rodgers and Hart were bogged in script trouble with a musical they hoped to launch on Broadway, and called on Hammerstein for assistance. The bogging was too complete, however; all that came of the show was one song, which went into the "Garrick Gaities" of happy memory. It was "Manhattan."

Between that early script disaster and "Oklahoma!" the collaborators moved along separate paths. Rodgers remained teamed with Hart and Hammerstein wrote with Kern and others. In one scene of the current "Allegro" is evidence that a circle has been completed, for "Mountain

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—*Photographs, by Graphic House, from "Allegro."*

"Allegro" joins "Oklahoma!" and "Carousel," "the third in a series of one-word titles that may eventually rival the Conradian sequence of 'Youth,' 'Victory,' 'Nostromo,' etc."

Greenery," of the early "Garrick Gaities" is there to show how things were during the Twenties. With "Oklahoma!" the partners found they liked doing things the same way, and have been doing them since.

Their basic principle is to attempt to combine words and music into one theatrical whole. Because they have heard it so often, they snarl at the word "integration," but at the same time they admit they can find no better. Integration is that time when the song rises from the story, and not from the whim of a director who feels that the up-front patrons may be growing restless without the girls. It also is when the song advances the story or sets the mood, instead of intruding itself with the primary purpose of making the hit parade.

Being active in many directions—from the Author's League to a music publishing house which they control—it is reasonable that Rodgers and Hammerstein should eventually become a legend. In the meanwhile, they are practical men of the theatre, whose business is the creation and production of plays. On Broadway, which habitually seeks easy labels, music-and-words collaborators usually are set down as "the American Gilbert and Sullivan" soon after their first hit show. Seldom are Rodgers and Hammerstein referred to as the "American Gilbert and Sullivan," a tribute almost as profound as that frightening line at the box office.

For the record, too, they have become a legend of sorts. The "original cast" recording of "Oklahoma!" for Decca has long since passed the half-million mark, which, at the number of sides contained in each volume, means well over several million records. It did more, possibly, to establish the prestige and importance of that kind of recording than any effort which preceded it, to joy of the phonograph companies and the delight of those who can relive their theatre experience at will. "Carousel" had an even more extended treatment on records, with its "Soliloquy" interesting such diverse talents as Frank Sinatra and James Melton. "Allegro" will soon be there to join them on the record shelf, this time with the Victor imprint mated with those of Rodgers and Hammerstein.

As to what the collaborators would do now, Mr. Rodgers recently did not know, or was not saying. The opera? He shrugged. The opera is partly a matter of semantics, but if what was meant was the form they use a little south of Times Square, he believed not. A true musical art-form will come from one of the stages of the Forties, he thinks, and he hopes that each of the efforts of his partner and himself is a step in the right direction. Richard Rodgers does not plan to follow Sir Arthur Sullivan into grand opera, nor, as managers, do he and his collaborator expect to quarrel over a carpet.

For they are not the "American Gilbert and Sullivan," but the American Rodgers and Hammerstein.

Lewis Nichols was for many years drama editor of The New York Times *and has recently resigned to free lance.*

A Selection of Recorded Rodgers and Hammerstein

"Oklahoma!"	
(with original cast)	(Decca album 359)
Bennett Fantasie—Kostelanetz	(Columbia 7417)
"Carousel"	
(with original cast)	(Decca album 400)
"Soliloquy"—	
Frank Sinatra	(Columbia 7492)
James Melton	(Victor 11-9116)
"Waltzes" Fritz Reiner and the Pittsburgh Symphony	(Columbia 12322)
"June is Bustin' Out All Over" Benny Goodman and Orchestra	(Columbia 36823)
"Allegro" (with original cast)	(Victor album) K-11)
"So Far"—	
Frank Sinatra	(Columbia 37883)
Perry Como	(Victor 20-2402)
Margaret Whiting	(Capitol 461)
Guy Lombardo	(Decca 24194)
"A Fellow Needs A Girl"	
Sinatra	(Columbia 37883)
Paul Weston	(Capitol 463)
Lombardo	(Decca 24194)
Como	(Victor 20-2402)
Jack Fina	(MGM 10085)
"The Gentleman is a Dope"	
Dinah Shore	(Columbia 37932)

Although its cast is not star-studded "Allegro" tallied more than half a million dollars' advance business before the curtain went up on the first performance.

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"Your Record Is Overdue"

KARLINE BROWN

LESS than a year ago all we had was an empty room in the Library Annex behind the main building of the Cincinnati Public Library—an empty room and an idea. But a lot has happened since then. Painters have given the four blank walls of that empty room an attractive coat of pale blue. Carpenters have built and installed counters and cabinets of blonde wood. We of the library staff have started filling up the counters and cabinets with a collection of films and records available to any individual or institution in the community we serve. Already the Films and Record Center, as our idea is now called, has won such a place for itself in the life of Cincinnati that we who dreamed it up and started it on the way to reality are feeling, to borrow the expression of the leprechaun in "Finian's Rainbow," "sort of grandish." And the project has barely begun!

Ours is by no means a unique project. New winds are blowing through public libraries these days, just as they are through the world; and one of the most exciting of them is the notion that it is the function of the library to disseminate information, inspiration, and recreation in every form in which they can be preserved, whether it is as books, films, slides, or recordings. Recently the Carnegie Foundation of New York underwrote a two-year program designed to help extend library film services throughout the country. This project is to be guided by Mrs. Patricia O. Blair, library film advisor of the American Library Association and formerly head of the film bureau of the Cleveland Public Library.

We had expected that our film and record center would provide an educational service for our patrons; we were surprised to discover that it would also provide an education for us who were building it up and operating it. The point can be best illustrated by detailing some of our experiences with the record section.

We found that our predecessors were so few that we had virtually to blaze a trail for ourselves. First of all we made a survey of the libraries which we knew already had or were planning to operate some kind of audio-visual service. Then we called upon local record distributors for suggestions as to how a public institution might spend the taxpayers' money most advantageously. We consulted with representatives of the Visual Aids Exchange of the Cincinnati Board of Education. We wrote newspaper record critics and individuals we knew to own large collections for advice—and incidentally dropped the hint that donations of records would be welcome.

Upon the basis of such surveys, we concluded that our collection should include every type of record made. Some we would allow to be borrowed for home use; others would be available only for listening at the library. In the former category fell four general types of records; classical, folk, and semi-popular music; literature and other speech recordings for both children and adults, including the usual ten- and twelve-inch discs recorded at seventy-eight revolutions per minute as well as sixteen-inch radio transcriptions at thirty-three and one-third rpm which play a side for fifteen minutes and on which have been recorded important discussion on international and inter-group understanding; language study, with Spanish (Henry Holt) and French (Linguaphone) as starters; and bird-calls (recorded at Cornell University). Among the records which could be listened to only at the library we planned to keep rare and irreplaceable discs; "limited" editions such as The Concert Hall Society sets; recordings of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and those of local composers and performers; and representative jazz recordings which serve as reflections of our times.

With these considerations in mind, we prepared our lists for first purchase. These ranged from the good, substantial roast beef and lamb chops of classical music, with a frill or two of the less fundamental, to Library of Congress and Disc folk music, Maurice Evans's "Hamlet" (Columbia MM 651) and Edna St. Vincent Millay in "Readings of Her Own Poems" (Victor M 836).

IN OPERATING our center we have done our best to keep our rules few and our routine simple. To learn if a record or album is available for loan, it is necessary only to look up its card, listed by composer (or author) and title, in the "in" section of our file. If the disc is already out on loan, its card will be found in the "out" file, stamped with the due date and with the name of the borrower written in. We also keep another file of slips arranged according to the borrower's name; these contain his address, phone number, number of the disc or album lent, due date, and his signature. When we opened the center we considered this system a makeshift, but after several months of operation it is still proving quite adequate.

To identify the records as ours, we print the name of the library on the label of every record upon acquisition. Fearful that the ink might rub off, we toyed with the idea of giving the label a coating of shellac. First, however, we tried wide Scotch tape and found that it served our purpose quite nicely.

One of our most vexing problems has been to provide adequate facilities for persons wishing to browse

(*Continued on page* 66)

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What Makes Rhumba?

WILLIAM GOTTLIEB

WHEN the bands of Noro Morales and Xavier Cugat played across the street from each other on Broadway last spring, both displayed signs claiming the title "King of the Rhumba." Each was partially correct. Cugat is still the biggest commercial draw, but Morales is gaining. Already he is the favorite among Spanish-speaking Americans, who constitute the biggest market. This was reflected in the last national contest conducted by *La Prensa*, Spanish-language daily, which showed Morales the easy winner, with Cugat way down the list.

From a strict musical standpoint, however, neither the genial Cuggie nor the balding Morales is king. A sugar cane's length ahead of them is a compact, ex-Cugat singer named Frank Grillo, known everywhere as Machito, whose latest issue—though recorded some years back—is Decca album A-355, in which he supports the great Afro-Cuban singer, Miguelito Valdes. Machito generally may be heard in a Broadway dance hall, the Palladium, where aficionados of the style follow him with intense devotion. Dizzy Gillespie, most influential of today's jazz musicians, frequents the bandstand to listen and, occasionally, to sit in. *Revista Teatral*, the Spanish-language weekly theatrical review, recently polled its readers, and this inner circle rated Machito on top, with Morales well favored. Cugat finished in eleventh place.

The basis of Machito's excellence is his rhythm section. In this authentic rhumba music, which Americans are beginning to hear for the first time (and like), the rhythm section is most of its body as well as much of its soul. Except possibly for a trumpet, the remaining instruments in rhumba bands are along for the ride. Key instrument within the rhythm section is the claves, two simple hardwood sticks generally wielded by the band's singer. Ben Pickering, a well-known American arranger who uses the name Roberto Rey to satisfy his Latin associates, states that the one consistency about the myriad rhumba forms (see box) is the clave beat. All have two-bar clave figures, with either three beats in the first bar and two in the second, or vice versa. Should the claves break this pattern, the music would become a shambles.

Bongos, another basic rhythm instrument, are small twin drums held between the knees and struck with palms, fingers, or sticks. To preserve the proper tautness of the skin heads, they must be heated every five minutes or so over a tiny alcohol stove. Biggest of the drums is the conga, a tall slightly bulging object, struck with the hands. They come in several sizes, of which the largest are used only for religious ceremonies.

Most familiar of the rhumba instruments are the maracas—gourds filled with shot, and providing the steady swish-swish that fills in the percussive pattern. Somewhat similar, but of only minor importance, are gourds called guiros, whose rough edges are scratched with a piece of metal. In the larger orchestras, twin snare drums called tymballis are generally found, often in conjunction with the conventional bass drum, cymbals, and cowbells. Tymballis have metal sides, and either the tops or sides of the instrument are struck by the hands, or by flexible, straight drum sticks which have a high incidence of breakage. The authentic rhumba bands use a piano, sometimes a string bass and less often a guitar to round out the rhythm section. On the melody side, there is traditionally only a single trumpet, though American taste has decreed the addition of trombone and reeds even in the band of such a purist as Machito.

Out of all this emerges a rhythmic counterpoint supplied by the seven or eight percussion instruments going simultaneously. Rhumba students assert that only Cuban musicians are able to get a proper, collective beat out of this seeming chaos, and thus the superiority of Machito to Morales, the latter being a Puerto Rican. On the lower, more commercial level are Cugat and Madriguera, who are held to miss the real feel of this music because they are Spaniards.

The musical brain behind the music of Machito is supplied by Mario Bouza, who formerly played trumpet in the band of Cab Calloway. In the true Latin tradition he is a relative, being married to a sister of Machito. Unfortunately, the best of Machito and Bouza has not yet been put on wax. Continental has confined Machito to sentimental boleros and other material musically nondescript. Closest to his "in person" sound may be heard on Continental 9000, titled "El Ray del Mambo."

A GLOSSARY OF RHUMBA

RHUMBA, though a specific type of music, is also a generic term for various forms in different rhythms and speeds. Somewhat similarly, though boogie-woogie is one way of playing the blues, it has its distinctive name. Those names by which rhumba music is identified on record labels may be identified as follows, with a characteristic example of each. The descriptions, of course, are tabloid.

Son: A slow, rhythmic dance tune in 2/4 time. ("Negra Leona." Cugat and Valdes. Columbia 36098.)

Son Montuno: A son, with tempo picked up at the end. ("Cometelo Tu." Poso. Coda 5053.)

Rhumba A fast son with "breaks," etc. Originally used only for exhibition dancing. ("Bim Bam Bum." Morales. Decca 21221.)

Mambo: A rhumba with a riff ending. ("El Guardia Con El Tolete." Machito. Verne 0145.)

Guaracha: A son with a "heavier" but slower beat than a rhumba. ("Cowbell Song." Madriguera. National 9031.)

Bolero: A slow, sweet ballad. Like a son. ("Besame Mucho." Jimmy Dorsey. D 18574.)

Guajira: Cuban hillbilly music with a slow beat. ("Guajira Guantanamera." Conjunto Cuba Libre. Coda 5031.)

Danzon: Stately dance music very popular in the tropics because it isn't strenuous. ("Almendra." Paulina Alverez. Victor 82768.)

Nañigo: Savage tribal music in 6/8 time. Religious origins. ("Cabildo." Valdes and Machito. Verne 0016.)

Afro Cubano: Heavily accented "blues" less violent than nañigos. ("Babalu." Casino de la Playa and Valdes. RCA-Victor 82634. Also Columbia 36068 and Musicraft.

Conga: One-two-three-kick stuff, now almost obsolete. Used in carnival street parades. ("One Two Three, Kick." Cugat. Victor 26384.)

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MUSIC FROM "SONG OF LOVE," new motion picture success, has been especially recorded for RCA Victor by the renowned pianist, Artur Rubinstein, who also plays these selections on the film sound track—

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Leonard Bernstein conducting the RCA Victor Orchestra. *Facsimile* (A Choreographic Essay)—Bernstein. M/DM-1142, $3.00.

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, Conductor: *Pavane for a Dead Princess*—Ravel. 11-9729, $1.00.

San Francisco Symphony Orch. Pierre Monteux, Cond.: *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales; Daphnis and Chloe, Suite No. 1*—Ravel. M/DM-1143, $5.00.

Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orch.: *Roméo et Juliette*, Op. 17—Berlioz. M/DM-1160, $3.85; V/DV-7 ("DeLuxe" non-breakable records), $7.00.

Heifetz Violinist: "Heifetz Encores" Album. Nine selections. With Emanuel Bay at the Piano. M-1158, $3.90.

Dorothy Kirsten, Soprano: *Mi Chiamano Mimì* (My Name is Mimi) and *Addio di Mimì* (Mimi's Farewell) (both from "La Bohême"). With the RCA Victor Orchestra, Jean Paul Morel, Conductor. Record 11-9694, $1.00.

James Melton Tenor: *M'apparì tutt' amor* from "Martha" and *La fleur que tu m'avais jetée* (Flower Song) from "Carmen." With the RCA Victor Orch., Jean Paul Morel, Cond. 10-1329, 75c.

Robert Shaw conducting the RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra: *Mass in B Minor*—J. S. Bach. Vol. I: M/DM-1145, $10.00; Vol. II: M/DM-1146, $9.00.

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quality, is Verne 1045, "El Guardia con el Tolete."

Morales, who records for Majestic, has had better luck with his material. Noro is an avid jazz fan, and would like to be known as the Latin Duke Ellington. Actually he is closer to Fats Waller, in his joviality, his roundness, his vigorous piano attack, and his choice of clever, broadly commercial material. The Morales forts are such self-composed novelties as "Walter Winchell Rhumba" (Majestic 5000) and "Wha' Happeen, Baby" (Majestic 1166). This last, based on a phrase that makes up half his conversation in English, is currently the catch-word of rhumbaland. Stronger fare are two sides in his latest album (Majestic 12): a pulsating son-montuno, "Ten Jabon," and a rhumba "O La-La." For the best examples of Morales's hard-hitting, block-chord piano and his frantic percussion, consult his work on the little labels (there are six) that specialize in rhumba. One, named "Coda," has an album of six piano improvisations, backed by rhythm. Another such label, "Seeco," uses similar instrumentation on an exciting rhumba with nanigo interludes: "Rumbambola."

Fountainhead of rhumba music is the little band, or conjuntos, that play in Cuban dives. Perhaps the finest conjunto available on records is led by Arsenio Rodriguez, a dark, massive man not unlike Art Tatum (both happen to be blind), who personifies the spirit of authentic rhumba music. His typical conjunto is made up of this forest of rhythm instruments: bongos, claves, conga, maracas, piano, bass, and guitar plus one or two trumpets and his own trés—a guitar with three pairs of strings, the pairs tuned in unison. You can hear him on "El Reloj de Pastoran (Victor 23-0470), or anonymously on "Paso en Tampa" (Coda 5053). Made on a summer visit of Rodriguez to New York, it tells of his troubles after landing in Tampa, with a text that consists mostly of the words—"Wha' you say?"

Rhumba music, in more or less its present form, has existed in Cuba for over a hundred years, much longer than jazz has here. Both rhumba and jazz have, obviously, identical African roots. Some of the African influence that came to the West Indies mixed with Spanish music to become rhumba. Other parts went south to become tangos (Argentina) and sambas (Brazil), while the rest went north to merge with American culture and become jazz. Rhumbas are far more primitive than jazz and, like primitive music everywhere, more complex rhythmically and simpler harmonically. Rhumba drummers, you might say, begin where Gene Krupa ends—which would seem the point at which something good should begin.

Jazz musicians, beginning with Duke Ellington's "Caravan" and "Azure" (Master 131), done with the help of his Puerto Rican trombonist Juan Tizol, have responded strongly to this influence. When Woody Herman's big band was the leading exponent of American swing, one of his most favored numbers was "Bijou" (Columbia 36861), a distinctly Latin idea. And the current band-of-the-year—Stan Kenton's—has named one of its best records "Machito" (Capitol 408), to honor the man responsible for its musical idea and from whom Kenton borrowed the bongo and conga drummers heard in the arrangement. As a result, a bongo drummer and a Latin guitarist have been added permanently to Kenton's band.

William Gottlieb is one of the New York editors of the musicians' publication Down Beat *and also columnist for* The Washington Post.

"The rhythm section is most of its body as well as much of its soul": Left to right (above) maracas, tymballis, claves, and bongos. Left (below) bongos being heated over an alcohol lamp to preserve tautness of the skin heads. Right (below): "Out of all this emerges a rhythmic counterpoint by the seven or eight instruments going simultaneously."

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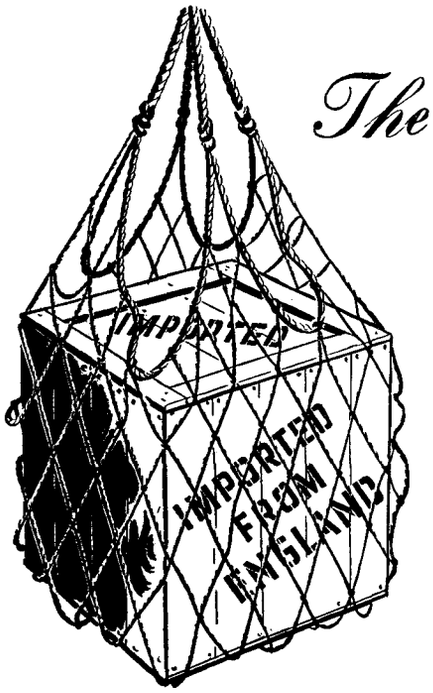

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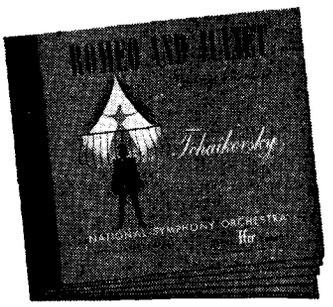
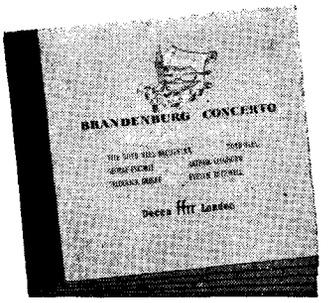
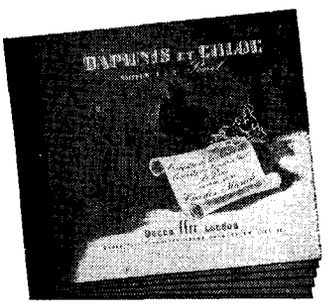


TCHAIKOVSKY: Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture. National Symphony Orchestra, Albert Coates, conductor. 6 sides. 12 inch. EDA No. 6.....$7.00

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3 in E Flat Major, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). London Philharmonic Orch., Victor De Sabata, conductor. 14 sides. 12 inch. EDA No. 19.....$15.00



BACH: Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F Major. Boyd Neel String Orchestra, Boyd Neel, conductor. 4 sides. 12 inch. EDA No. 27. .$5.00



RAVEL: Daphnis and Chloe Suites Nos. 1 & 2. Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Charles Münch, conductor. 6 sides. 12 inch. EDA No. 29. $7.00

STRAVINSKY: The Firebird Suite. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Ernest Ansermet, conductor. 6 sides. 12 inch. EDA No. 30. .$7.00

HOLST: The Perfect Fool Ballet Music. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Dr. Malcolm Sargent, conductor. 4 sides. 12 inch. EDA No. 31.....$5.00

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Reviews of the Month

The poles-apart Humperdinck and Shostakovitch—separated by even more than the Poles between Germany and Russia—are next-door neighbors on the month's record lists. In addition to these recording premieres, there is a complete "Elijah," a set of all the Beethoven "Rasoumovsky" quartets, and a Toscanini-lit album from Berlioz's "Romeo and Juliet." That is the pay-dirt; the run-of-the-mine offers such lesser—but hardly unremarkable—matters as a new Haydn "Surprise," a Schubert "Unfinished," Liszt and Tchaikovsky piano concertos, plus more welcome Mozart.

HUMPERDINCK: *"Hansel and Gretel," with Risë Stevens, Nadine Conner, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Max Rudolf.* (Columbia album MOP 26, $17.70.)

Definitely this first collaboration of Columbia and the Metropolitan Opera is "Hansel and Gretel" not "Hänsel und Gretel;" for beyond the use of an English text, it has a lighter touch, a swifter pace than some performances I have heard in the German tradition. To this, Miss Conner makes the pertest contribution, singing her music delightfully, suggesting by sound alone much of the appealing character she makes of Gretel in the opera house. With Miss Stevens's Hansel I am a good deal less happy; she doesn't project the English text at all clearly, and there is a fussy "phonetic" caution in the ones that are heard, at the expense of Hansel's boyishness. Neither is likely to be challenged soon, however, for this first "Hansel and Gretel" is likely to be the standard for some years.

As an ensemble venture, the opera owes much to the energetic but rather rigid direction of Max Rudolf, who gets a reasonable feeling of performing continuity into the varied elements — the orchestra, which plays unexpectedly well, the principals noted above, and their associates: Claramae Turner, a round-voiced Mother, John Brownlee, a dusty, dry-voiced Father, and Thelma Votipka, who does the soundest singing of anybody in her doubling as the Sandman and the Witch. Lillian Raymondi is heard briefly as the Dewman. The purely orchestral numbers—the overture especially—haven't the flexibility of pace one would like.

Aside from an unnatural prominence of the voices against the orchestra, the engineers have done a skilful job of suggesting the resonance of the Metropolitan auditorium, without ending up with an echo. In all, an encouraging start. (See IMPRESSIONS.)

SHOSTAKOVITCH: *Symphony No. 7 ("Leningrad"). The Buffalo Philharmonic conducted by William Steinberg.* (Musicraft album 83, $10.70.)

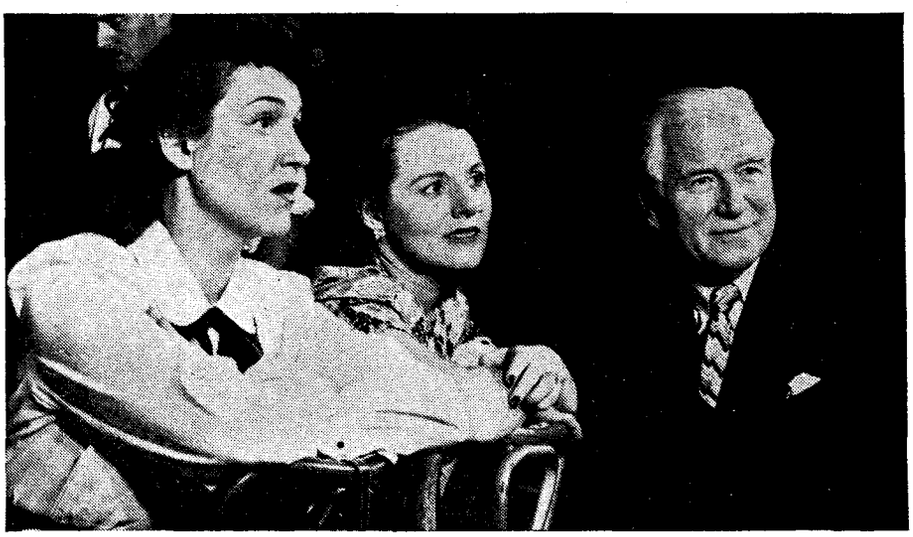
At the risk of curdling slightly more the soured milk of Russian-American relations, it must be said that the special kind of scrutiny which a recording permits is cruelty itself to the artistic pretensions of this score. The vastness of its size is barrel-like to the few nuggets of musical gold which rattle about in it. Nevertheless, there is no parallel for it anywhere on records, to my knowledge; and as a documentation of a work which was a nine days' wonder (at a time of some rather ponderable days) it has its curiosity value.

Steinberg's performance is soundly conceived, though he never generates the kind of intensity which some conductors have in the tortuous crescendo of the first movement. The orchestra is not the equal of the ranking ones of the country in tonal richness. At the height of the vast sound contrived, the recording shrieks on the high end; elsewhere it is well defined, especially in the rumbling double basses and percussion.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Concerto in B flat minor. Artur Rubinstein, piano, with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting the Minneapolis Orchestra.* (Victor album 1159, $5.10.) LISZT: *Concerto in E flat. Rubinstein, piano, with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati.* (Victor album 1144, $3.30.)

The charge of the light brigade was as nothing beside the thunder and sweep of Rubinstein through these "valleys of death" for many a lesser pianist. For, with all the grandeur and pomp of manner which he applies without stint, Rubinstein can turn a phrase as deftly as any miniaturist, cascade an octave run as smoothly as a ball rolling downstairs. The release, incidentally, restores a Rubinstein version of Tchaikovsky to the prominence it enjoyed prior to the frantic collaboration of Toscanini and Horowitz, in which the maestro's manner was as unsuitable to the matter in hand as it is suitable in the Berlioz noted below. Mitropoulos does not do as much for the orchestral score as Mengelberg does for the Hansen playing on Ultraphone; but it is strong and assertive enough for a successful collaboration. I do not care much for the thinnish sound of the hall in which the recording was made, an unfortunate influence on the total sound.

The same factor, working on the sound of an inferior orchestra, is blemishing to the Liszt performance. The Dallas brass are hardy men, and they blow with the exuberance traditionally Texan; but Liszt asks a measure of resonance which they do not provide. Moreover, the pace that saves a side also taxes the manpower involved. With Rubinstein in full cry, the mêlée of sound makes one long for a soundproofed booth.



Risë Stevens, Nadine Conner, and Edward Johnson, General Manager of the Metropolitan Opera, listen to the playback of the "Hansel and Gretel" recording.

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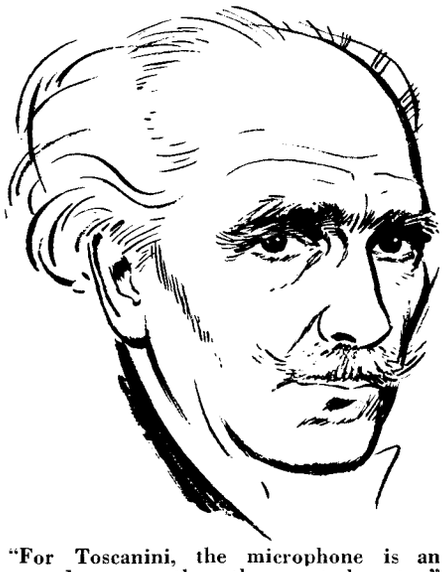
BERLIOZ: *Excerpts from "Romeo and Juliet." Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Orchestra.* (Victor album 1160, $4.05, also available on Vinylite, $7.20.)

Arturo Toscanini's recent interest in the music of Berlioz may well be a factor of crucial importance in establishing this music at its proper valuation in American concert halls. Here, for example, is playing of such intensity and compulsion, such breadth and fervor that no music lover should deny himself the enjoyment of it, regardless of any previous prejudice, *contra* Berlioz.

The sections he has chosen are among the noblest pages of this feverish score: "Romeo seul Tristesse," "Concert et Bal," "Grande fete chez Capulet," and most welcome of all, the "Scene d'Amour." The extraordinary mood that Toscanini achieves in the last of these, its sorrowing eloquence and nobility, are exemplary of the distinction between the best of his records and those of virtually every other conductor. For him, the microphone is an eavesdropper rather than a taskmaster; the sense of actual performance is here as it seldom is in the rigid grooves. I challenge the reader to hear the side of the "Scene d'Amour" which contains one of the most moving episodes in all music, and then resist the urge to buy the album.

As orchestral playing, the work of the NBC ensemble is miraculously responsive, though the string tone is glassy, the brasses oversharp as reproduced here. I. K.



"For Toscanini, the microphone is an eavesdropper rather than a taskmaster."

BEETHOVEN: *The Rasoumowsky Quartets—Quartets No. 7, in F; 8, in E Minor; 9, in C, Op. 59. The Paganini Quartet: Henri Temianka, 1st Violin; Gustave Rosseels, 2nd Violin; Robert Courte, Viola; Robert Maas, Violoncello.* (Victor albums 1151-2-3, $6.15, $5.10, and $5.10 respectively.)

In a moment of pure esthetic recklessness, circa 1920, the Victor Talking Machine Company issued a single-sided record of the Flonzaley Quartet which contained nearly half of the final fugue from Op. 59, No. 3. We have come far since, but not before the present edition have the three Quartets been issued simultaneously in a recording by the same group, which suggests or emphasizes their unity. The internal qualities which imply a unity or continuity of utterance could be discussed at considerable length were there considerable space; externally the "Rasoumowsky" Quartets have in common their creation in the same most vigorous period of the composer's life, their dedication to a musical count who was Russian ambassador to the Empire, and their length, more extended than customary.

The new edition attacks formidable competition in the versions of the various Quartets already and still available in the catalogues, of which none is bad and several are superb. To simplify a delicate task of selection it may be said at once that the recorded realism of the sound is superior—obviously, strikingly superior—in the new edition, to that of the best of its predecessors; and it is even doubtful that any string quartet has ever been put upon discs with an equivalent resemblance to the original acoustic values. There is no audible strain at any point in the cyclic or dynamic ranges. The whisper of a *pp* is distinct beyond precedent; and the fortes, at whatever pitch, have been registered with a blurless solidity exceptional in recording. With the extremes so just, the shades between are easy; but the crescendos and diminuendos of the Paganini's disciplined expression nevertheless are a marvel of reproduction.

The discipline and precision of the ineptly titled quartet recall the penetrating punctiliousness of the Flonzaleys. It is curious that these sober traits should produce in the First "Rasoumowsky" Quartet — the most dramatic of the three—the one performance in the present edition which can be unhesitantly declared the best on discs. The long line of the principal subject of the first movement (in the even statement of Maas's 'cello) is not disserved but emphasized by the nice commentary of the other instruments which will not slur a note; and even in the wonderful adagio, one of those melting landscapes with which Beethoven overwhelms us after surrendering himself, the evenness of attack, which nowhere breaks the continuity of the song, is not less eloquent for being restrained. The scherzo with its staccato whims and solo on one note is obviously proper grist for this clean-cutting mill, and the final "Thème Russe" is bowed with an appropriate vigor controlled by the tautness of style characteristic of the performance as a whole. Other versions still listed, by the Busch, Coolidge, and Roth Quartets, have neither the homogeneous excellence of this performance nor the inclusive virtues of its recording.

The second Quartet permits no such positive assertion. Here the new issue must bear comparison with the Budapest Quartet (Victor album 340), whose Op. 59, No. 2 has long been a masterpiece of quartet playing. Opinion here favors the older version. The Budapest manner may be called, without excessive glibness, intuitive; and the Paganini style, analytic. The instruments of the former are in effect more individual, less restrained, and more colored than the latter's, which persistently coalesce into a choir of peers at every opportunity, and when not in unison play with a rare uniformity of intonation, tempo, and intensity. Oddly, the Paganinis are the more persuasive in the diffuse and romantic adagio. In the three quick movements the Budapesters are warmer and more tonic. A good performance by the Coolidge Quartet in Victor album 919 has not the merits of these.

The Third "Rasoumowsky" exists in an excellent performance by the Budapest Quartet in a recording (Columbia album 510) whose occasional roughness obscures its tonal beauty. This could justify a replacement by the Paganinis, whose performance, utilizing their now familiar style, has a distinction of outline—especially in the minuet and wayward fugue—remarkable for its perpetual clarity and order. C. G. BURKE.

C. G. Burke was for several years record reviewer for The American Mercury.

TIME TO RE-RECORD

Here are the editor's nomination for catalogue works in need of new versions. What are yours?

Schubert: Rosamunde Ballet Music.

Cantaloube: Songs of the Auvergne.

Elgar: Enigma Variations.

Beethoven: Weingartner orchestration of "Hammerklavier" sonata.

Richard Strauss: "Burleske" for orchestra and piano.

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Recordings *Reports on Current Releases*

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Bach: "Concerto in D minor" for violin and oboe. Willem Van den Burg conducting the Pacific Symphonetta, with Manuel Compinsky, violin, and Gordon Schoenberg, oboe. Alco set A-202, $4.00	Familiar enough in its form for two claviers, this alternative use is more successful than one would have expected. The material suits the instruments well, especially in the superb slow section. Fine musical playing, brightly recorded in a dead studio. Plastic surfaces well made.
Beethoven: "Sonata in F minor" (opus 57). Rudolf Serkin, piano. Columbia album MM-711, $4.60	Strong and somewhat rigid performance, far less "Appassionata" than the Rubinstein of last year. Serkin seems bent on remaking his character in the mold of the music, but the results are primarily ugly emphasis and over-statement. Good piano reproduction at medium volume, thin when sound is at maximum power.
Chopin: "Ballade in A flat." Guiomar Novaës, piano. Columbia No. 72345, $1.25	Winsome and womanly playing, an easy enough surmise if one knows who the performer is. Mme. Novaës is a perceptive and fine-grained player, somewhat lacking in the impetuosity for the climaxes of this piece. Her characteristic tone is well suggested.
Haydn: "Symphony No. 94" ("Surprise"). Serge Koussevitzky conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Victor album 1155, $4.05	A welcome replacement for the old Koussevitsky, unavailable for several years. Clean, well-articulated performance, suitable for the black and white effects of Koussevitzky's direction. The orchestra sounds large to me for some of Haydn's writing, but the choice of tempo for the "Surprise" movement is justice itself, as is the *giocosa* spirit of the final. Efficient, broad-range recording.
Massenet: "Mort du Thais." Dorothy Kirsten, soprano, with Robert Merrill, baritone, and orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. Victor No. 11-9792, $1	A bit of a soulful gem from "Thais," amounting to the familiar "Meditation" in its ultimate form for soprano, baritone, solo violin, and orchestra. Fervent singing, excellent recording. With it, Kirsten does an ingratiating "In Quelle Trine Morgide" from Puccini's "Manon Lescaut."
Mozart: "Seraglio" and "Figaro" arias. Eleanor Steber, soprano, with orchestra directed by Jean Paul Morel. Victor album 1157, $3	"Martern aller Arten" (sung in English), "Non So Più Cosa Son" and "Deh vieni non tardar" are the delights of this album, sung with a security and finish which Miss Steber has often approached at the Metropolitan but never achieved. The orchestra could be larger, but it is directed by Morel with notable zeal. The tone and balance of the recording are first rate.
Mozart: "Catalogue" aria ("Don Giovanni"). Joel Berglund, baritone, with orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. Victor No. 10-1346, 75c	Good resonant English recording of an air asking more subtlety and finish than Berglund provides. Leporello would be no companion for the lecherous Giovanni were he so blunt and stolid as this singer's tones paint him.
Mozart: "Quintet in D" (K. 593). Budapest Quartet with Milton Katims, viola. Columbia album 708, $4.60.	Magnificently rich, resonant reproduction of the Budapest-Katims string tone. I do not hear quite the deftness or subtlety of the old Pro Arte (V-Set 350) but there is fine temper in this treatment, ample understanding of Mozart.
Mozart: "Symphony in D" (No. 20). Edvard Fendler conducting a chamber orchestra. VOX album 171, $4.75	Not only a first recording, but also a first experience for most listeners with this product of Mozart's fifteenth year. Brisk, cheery music, with a slow movement of distinction even for Mozart. Fendler leads his little group with a sure hand. The good sound contrived by the engineers is much offset by the dull, unresonant studio.
Ponchielli: "Suicidio" ("La Gioconda"). Emmy Destinn, soprano. Victor No. 15-1014, $2.65	One of the latest in Victor's "Heritage" series and honestly entitled to that prizable word. Destinn's vocal strength and dramatic projection are truly a heritage that any singer of the day might value as a legacy. Note, particularly, the contralto richness of the low tones, the fine brilliance of the top ones. For the time (1914) a successful recording. With it is a version of "Un Bel Dì" (from "Butterfly") which is impressive if not breathtaking—as the other is.
Schubert: "Symphony in B minor" ("Unfinished") Bruno Walter conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra. Columbia album 699, $4.60	A much more creditable Walter version than his old one with the Vienna Philharmonic. Many fewer "romantic" touches, much more straightforward music. Big, roomy recording, also fine playing by the Philadelphia woodwinds. On balance, a better buy than the Beecham, my previous favorite.
Strauss, Johann: "Mein herr Marquis." Erna Sack, soprano. Radiofunken No. 70045, $2.62	Domestic repressings, on Vinylite, of European originals. Dazzling vocalization, in the "Fledermaus" (or "Rosalinda") spirit, with a high F sharp and G for those who value such favors. "Spiel Ich die Unschuld" is its partner. Both originals were excellent recordings, and the dubbings preserve most of their values. Sack's phenomenal high tones (her special distinction) are vividly audible.
Verdi: Excerpts from "Forza del Destino," sung by Jan Peerce, tenor, and Leonard Warren, baritone, with orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. Victor album 1156, $3	Over-amplified, if impressive, reproduction of "Invano Alvaro," "Ah! Una Suora Mi Lasciati," and the famous "Solenne in Quest' Ora." Hard to believe these singers have so much power, under any circumstances. Much more natural, and attractive recording of "O Mimì" from the fourth act of "Boheme," on which Peerce is outstanding. (Erich Leinsdorf conducts "Solenne in Quest' Ora".)
Vivaldi: "Concerto Grosso" (D minor). Alexander Schneider and the Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra. Keynote No. 20003, $1.84	Spirited playing of a great work in the "L'estro Armonica" group, but unfortunately compressed on a single twelve-inch record. Consequently, the "Siciliano" is too fast, the final section also undervalued. Superb string tone, but not the desirable item it might be.
Wagner: "Die Meistersinger" ("Am Stillen Herd" and "Preislied"). Set Svanholm, tenor, with orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissman. Victor No. 11-9791, $1	Thick going in "Am Stillen Herd" for Svanholm, who is not lyric enough for the music. However, he delivers a well-phrased "Prize Song," lacking, of course, the required chorus. I. K.

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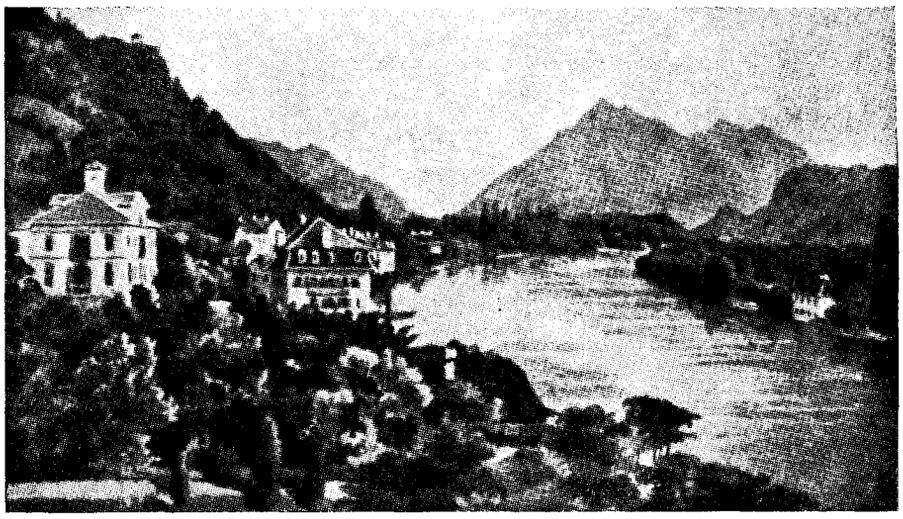


Felix Mendelssohn grew up a scholar, a fine sportsman, an excellent writer—even a gifted painter as evidenced by this watercolor he did of Thoune in 1847.

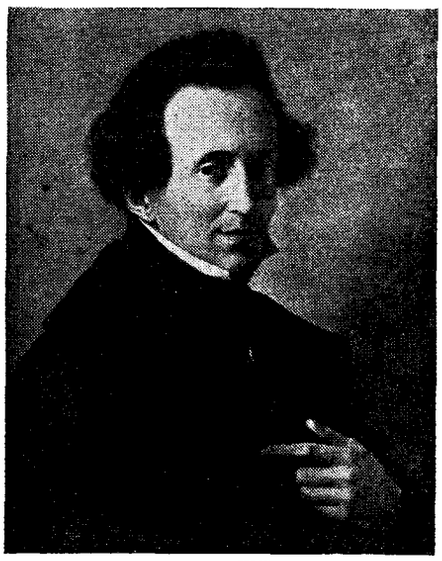
The Conservative Romantic

KARL GEIRINGER

IT IS HARD to properly evaluate the works of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, as they were overestimated during his lifetime and underestimated after his death. Hardly any other great man was equally blessed by destiny. Felix was the son of a banker and the grandson of a philosopher whose works were translated into all European languages. Wealth and unusual mental abilities were his heritage. As a child he enjoyed the friendship of the greatest German poet, Goethe, and he grew up both a scholar and a fine sportsman. While still in his teens, he so brilliantly translated a Latin comedy by Terence in the metre of the original that it appeared in print, and at the same time he won prizes as a horseman and swimmer. His artistic talents were by no means confined to music; he was an excellent writer and a gifted painter of landscapes (see cut above).

In the field of music, difficulties did not exist for Mendelssohn. He was a fine pianist—although the piano never dominated his style—and attained equal skill in his compositions for orchestra or chorus. The intricacies of polyphony were handled by him with mastery; his musical architecture was always well balanced and treated with classical competence. Whatever Mendelssohn wrote revealed an expert craftsman and a highly cultured artist.

It is not surprising that the early nineteenth century completely fell under the spell of the artist and man Mendelssohn. After his premature death, however, more and more voices were raised to deny the greatness of the "Son of the Gods," as one critic had called young Felix. Fault was found with the smooth elegance and easy brilliance of Mendelssohn's compositions. Music lovers turned their backs on his well-polished, over-refined style, resenting its weak sentimentality and occasional genteel monotony. An increasing neglect of the composer Mendelssohn was the consequence, reaching its climax in the attitude of Nazi Germany which for racial reasons forbade performance of any of this master's works.



—*Wilhelm von Schadow.*

Mendelssohn as a young man: "wealth and unusual mental abilities were his heritage."

Now that a hundred years have passed since the death (on November 4, 1847) of this most conservative among the romantic composers, we are better equipped to judge both the merits and the weaknesses of his music. If everything had not come so easily to Mendelsson, his music might have developed greater depth. On the other hand we cannot but bow to the greatness of some of the revelations of his genius. The "Midsummer Night's Dream" overture, written at the age of seventeen, initiated a new type of fairy music, which was often imitated, but never equaled; and on almost the same level are the other numbers of the incidental music to Shakespeare's play, added at a later date. In the three great symphonies, the "Scottish," the "Italian," and the "Reformation," as well as in the "Fingal's Cave" overture, romantic orchestration reached a peak of transparent clarity. Mendelssohn's "Concerto in E Minor" might be considered the finest work written for violin and orchestra. It solves the great problem of every concerto, that of appearing technically more difficult to the audience than to the soloist. His piano trios and string quartets will be appreciated as long as chamber music is cultivated. His "Variations Sérieuses" and "Rondo Capriccioso" for piano are the noble and brilliant utterances of a highly gifted artist, while in his popular "Songs Without Words," the charm of a true poet of the keyboard is revealed. His last great composition, "Elijah," written in 1846 for a performance in Birmingham, England, belongs among the most important representatives of the oratorio literature in the nineteenth century. Here the baroque majesty of Handel and Bach is combined with a romantic wealth of harmony and melodic beauty. At its first performance, the "applause," according to an eyewitness, was "so enormous that it was almost grotesque."

While the first-mentioned Mendelssohn works have been available for some time in recordings, "Elijah" was sadly neglected by the gramophone companies. Now, at last, a full recording of this imposing work has been made, and it is highly gratifying that the new discs meet the highest standard (Columbia album No. 715, $22.70). They are done by the same group which last year gave us the glorious recording of the "Messiah." Sir Malcolm Sargent's faithful conductorship again reveals the beauties of the score, without ever descending to empty brilliance. It seems hardly necessary to emphasize the complete

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balance between voices and orchestra. The instruments sound rich and colorful, but they never obscure the predominating voices. The singing of the Huddersfield Choral Society is full of dramatic power, displaying the most thrilling crescendos and, at the same time, an enviable precision of attack and accuracy of pitch. Isobel Baillie, soprano; Gladys Ripley, contralto; James Johnston, tenor, are the same soloists as in the "Messiah," and their performance is again distinguished by admirable vocal culture. The rich, mellow voice of Miss Ripley is used to full advantage, although greater clarity of diction might sometimes be indicated. Harold Williams, bass, the Elijah of the performance, whose voice combines warm sonority with flexibility of tone, is a newcomer to the soloists' group. On the whole, the technical quality of the discs is of the highest.

The new "Elijah" shows that the treasure chest of Mendelssohn's works has not yet been sufficiently explored by record makers. Those music lovers who are now discovering the beauties of Mendelssohn's last oratorio will wish for a similar recording of his earlier oratorio, "St. Paul," and of his symphony-cantata, "Song of Praise" (Lobgesang). They might delight even more in a short secular work, "The First Walpurgis-Night," a humorous composition, full of fire and impetus, which in a good recording is sure to win the composer new friends. Among the chamber music compositions, the brilliant "Octet" for double string quartet, of which so far only an arrangement of the scherzo is available, ought to be presented in a complete recording. Some of Mendelssohn's songs would be welcome.

Karl Geiringer held the post of librarian for the Vienna "Friends of Music" before the Anschluss, and has written standard biographies of Brahms, Schubert, and Haydn. He is at present professor in the College of Music of Boston University.

Bruin Spoofs Man

THE BEAR THAT WASN'T. By Frank Tashlin. Narrated by Keenan Wynn. Music Composed by Walter Schumann. Adapted and directed by Robert Welch. MGM Album 12-A. 8 sides.

THERE are things beside children which should be seen, not heard; among them are those fragile, incomplete ideas which depend for their sustenance and consummation on an image evoked in the mind of the person who views them. Frank Tashlin's "The Bear That Wasn't" was such an idea. In simple allegory it set forth a basic truth about human existence: man is constantly being exploited through the ruse of extolling him as something which he is not, something higher, finer, greater. This notion was delineated by Mr. Tashlin, a Hollywood cartoon artist, in drawings which imposed a minimum of implication and stimulated a maximum of inference. As a result the reader, or viewer of the book, was able to enter the tale and fill it out with his own details, his own interpretations, his own meditations on the curious creatures which man, at one time or another, believes himself to be.

Now the bear is articulate; he is on records; he has a voice, a narrator, a director, a musical accompaniment, and sound effects. The skeleton of prose which Mr. Tashlin devised has been amplified; remarks and metaphors and passages of description have been added. These block out the listener and reduce him from participant to audience. The satirical base of the story is too frail to support an audience; it collapses into something which may amuse the children, but which even they will not play often. The skill of Mr. Tashlin is missing; in place of his titillating exaggerations and simple symbology are noises, a voice, a plethora of unfunny lines, and a pedestrian musical score. Mr. Wynn worked hard and MGM managed to turn out a creditable recording job, but the bear, if he is around to hear it, will have one more reason for hibernation this winter.

It is curious that Hollywood, which specializes in revising the products of man's intelligence downward, considers itself particularly apt in the matter of humor, which needs, even when it comes from man's finest minds, revision upward. It is odd that the bear should have come from Hollywood in the first place; that the genius of the cinema has reduced him to the normal stature of studio colossi is an indication that mentality is proceeding as usual beyond the Sierras. The bear, if he hopes ever to be understood, should pack his pemmican kit and head East.

THOMAS SUGRUE.

Thomas Sugrue's most recent literary collaboration was with Eddie Condon on "We Called it Music." He wrote the original review of "The Bear That Wasn't" in SRL.

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SCRATCHING *the* SURFACE

HOLLYWOOD.

WAS THAT Ferrucco Tagliavini, last year's sensational operatic success at the Metropolitan, in the Republic studio for a Victor recording session? If so, it would confirm the rumors that Cetra, the Italian firm which owns his contract for recordings, has made a deal with Victor for the services of the artist in America. The understanding is that Tagliavini will remain exclusively a Cetra artist for complete operas and ensemble work, but will make a series of individual arias for Victor. Meanwhile, his imported discs are selling briskly with the limited number of shops which have acquired the distribution rights. That Republic studio, incidentally, may become as famous in American recording annals as Kingsway Hall in London, which Columbia utilized for many sessions and has now become the property of English Decca. Igor Stravinsky found it much to his taste for his first sessions as a Victor artist, during which he directed his "Danses Concertantes," the divertimento based on "Le Baiser de la Fee," and "Scherzo à la Russe."

* * *

Other recording activity in these parts in recent weeks includes an album of Brahms lieder sung by Helen Traubel, for which the pianist was Coenraad V. Bos, celebrated as an accompanist for many of the great recitalists of this century. As a young man, Bos had the honor to play the accompaniments for the same songs when they were first heard in Vienna in 1896. The late Emanuel Feuermann accidentally came upon a letter written by Brahms after the performance, predicting a fine future for Bos. When Feuermann presented the testimonial to him a few years ago, Bos learned, for the first time, the high opinion the composer had expressed of his work.

* * *

The industrious Artur Rubinstein is now in Europe, where his schedule includes two concerts in London for the Jewish Joint Distribution Fund, but the reports of his recent experiences in Buenos Aires continue to come back here, where he makes his between-seasons home. Rubinstein was originally scheduled to play in the Teatro Colón, but canceled his appearance when he discovered that local custom decreed that all performances in that hall be broadcast without payment to the artist. This gesture may or may not have been responsible for the difficulty Rubinstein then encountered in having his piano, sent by boat from America long before, cleared through the customs. His dilemma was resolved when Steinway and Sons put a concert grand on a plane from New York on a Friday, had it in Buenos Aires on Saturday in time for Rubinstein to give the first of nine concerts in the Rex Theatre—a moving picture house—the next day.

* * *

Should David Raksin, who became famous when his theme music for "Laura" was converted into a popular song, be fortunate, he may find himself honored as the first musician ever to be banned in Boston. He has made a volume of his "Forever Amber" score, and reports are that it does for wax what "Amber" did for print.

* * *

The Santa Monica Symphony, a group of ninety studio musicians who, one evening a week, get together to play rarely heard works under the direction of Jacques Rachmilovich, is preparing a version of the Saint-Saëns violin concerto, of which the Henri Merckel recording has been unavailable for some time. This will be produced by Disc, which also released the same group's performance of Rachmaninoff's "Bells" symphony. How much of Poe's original poem may be heard in this recording is debatable; for Rachmaninoff used a Russian version of Poe for his original setting, and in order to preserve the line of the music, an English translation of this was made for the recording. To complicate matters further, the Russian text used by Rachmaninoff was made from a German version of Poe's original!

* * *

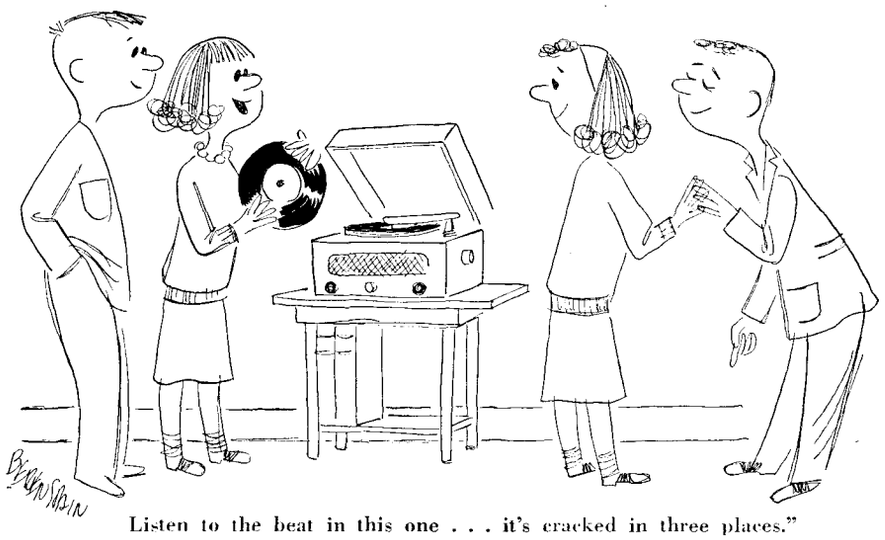
Capitol Records has climbed aboard the "Freedom Train" with what is perhaps the largest array of musical passengers to date — Peggy Lee, Johnny Mercer, Margaret Whiting, Paul Weston, The Pied Pipers, and Benny Goodman.

* * *

If Columbia should ever get around to reissuing Ruth Etting's classic recording of "If I Could Be With You," there should be new label credit for Larry Adler, along with Joe Venuti, Eddie Lang, Miff Mole, Frank Trumbauer, and the other great side men who sat in that session. Adler was a Gus Edwards protege, lolling in front of Dave's Blue Room in New York when a raspy-voiced individual leaned out of a cab and croaked, "Hey kid. Got that French harp with you?" Larry nodded and the man said, "Come along." They went up to the studio where Larry's chaperon said, "Dis kid is good. Stick him on the record." Larry played eight choice bars in Etting's great record. When the date was finished, Larry brought up the matter of payment. His drumbeater and kidnaper, Colonel "Gimp" Snyder—famous as Etting's sponsor, manager and general supervisor snarled, "G'wan get outa here with that crummy tin toy." Larry got.

LEONARD HOFFMANN.

Leonard Hoffmann is a writer for Metro Goldwyn Mayer who will report on West Coast activities. Oscar Levant will again contribute to RECORDINGS *when he returns East.*



Listen to the beat in this one . . . it's cracked in three places."

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THE JAZZ BEAT

IMPROMPTUS NOT BY CHOPIN

FOR AS long as jazz musicians have been making records studio directors have tried to inject an air of spontaneity into the proceedings. Some of the unsubtle have simply made quantities of alcoholic stimulant available to the performers and allowed metabolism to take its course. Others, more crafty, belong to the school which believes in telling the musicians to relax. "This is just a *test,* fellows," they will say. "Take it easy—it's not important—just a *test.*" In this instance, if the theory works, the supervisor finds that the *test* side is more fluid and natural, that by virtue of his ruse he has taken the inevitable studio "pressure" off the players.

But, even though more or less untrammeled renditions have been achieved by these and other artifices, there is still the time limitation of the ten-inch disk. A hot soloist, for instance, knows exactly how many bars he will have in which to improvise and this time-segment must remain fixed lest the record run over its allotted three-and-a-fraction minutes. In a jam session if a player takes a solo and seems to have a lot left, the leader will beckon him to take another and another until either his ideas or endurance is depleted.

So the recording session and the jam session remained worlds apart until someone thought of transcribing a *performance* and then editing it for use on ten- or twelve-inch record sides. Vox Records is a staunch exponent of this method—to make the record fit the performance rather than limit the performance to the rigid space of the record.

Thus, two fine albums:—"Charlie Christian Memorial Album" (Vox Album VSP 302, $3.93) and "Saturday Night Swing Session" (Vox Album VSP 303, $3.93). The Christian package was recorded one night at "Minton's Playhouse," birthplace of bebop, by an amateur engineer for his private jazz collection. The magnificent profusion of the guitarist's solos has, for counterpoint, the sounds of Harlem dancers and listeners. At the drums is a gentleman named Kenny Clark and for all six sides he seems to have the situation well in hand, tasteful, zestful, yet unobtrusive, a joy to hear. This drummer and the lamented Christian, abetted by the authentic atmosphere, conspire to make this one of the most moving sequences on record.

More of this welcome actuality is evident in the "Swing Session" sides, taken "off-the-air" during a broadcast. In these grooves are "Flip" Phillips's sure-fingered, coarse-textured tenor saxophone, the almost careless trumpeting of Roy Eldridge and Al Casey, Eddie Safranski and "Specs" Powell in trio. If these soloists happen to be your fancy, they may be heard here in some of their most heated declamations.

LEFT WING

DIZZY GILLESPIE: *Oopapada; OW!* (Victor 20-2480, 63¢). *All The Things You Are; Dizzy Atmosphere* (Musicraft 488, 79¢).

It is to Victor's credit to be the first major company to record a bebop aggregation. Gillespie's first two sides for them are a long way from creative satisfaction; the first is an hilarious, but calculated clambake which might easily sweep the nation while "OW!" has a gorgeous Dizzy solo to make it worth the wax expended. The Musicraft recordings are good examples of facile small-band bebop, by a sextet which includes the phenomenal Charlie Parker's saxophone.
Recording: Good. Surface: Good.

STAN KENTON: *Minor Riff; Down in Chihuahua* (Capitol B449, 79¢).

Capitol's engineers again go their effective, echo-happy way in cutting this fine performance. Kenton gets

an amazingly different collective sound out of the same instrumentation most other bands use. *Chihuahua* turns out to be a subtle lampooning of a "type" song, worthy of Abe Burrows.
Recording: Excellent. Surface Good.

CENTER

BENNY CARTER: *Prelude to A Kiss; I Can't Escape from You* (Capitol 40048, 63¢).

In "Prelude" Carter has written an arrangement impressive enough to challenge Duke Ellington's original Brunswick disc of one of the loveliest melodies he ever wrote. Both recordings are punctuated by that poignant Carter legato, and his typically agitated unison passages for the reeds.
Recording: Excellent. Surface: Good.

ARTHUR "BIG BOY" CRUDUP: *I Don't Know It; That's Your Red Wagon* (Victor 20-2387, 63¢).

A journey to the end of a release sheet will prove rewarding to the collector for there is listed the ill-named "race" items. Buried under an avalanche of songstresses, crooners, and Mickey Mouse bands is Crudup's latest gem scored for solo voice, rhythm, and slightly out-of-tune guitar. Both sides are examples of the ingenuous conviction, the earthy poetry which characterize an authentic blues shouter.
Recording: Good. Surface: Good.

RIGHT WING

BIX BEIDERBECKE AND FRANK TRUMBAUER: *Bix and Tram* (Columbia Album C-144, $3.75).

A good example of what Duke Ellington calls period music, these productions *circa* 1928. Beiderbecke's indomitable cornet speaks as trenchantly today as it did two decades ago. If some of the "breaks" sound corny, remember that these are the originals on which larcenous arrangers have been foraging for years.
Recording: Adequate. Surface: Good.

BESSIE SMITH: *Volume II* (Columbia Album C-142, $3.75).

Having the vestigial decency to flush hotly at his heresy, the writer nevertheless must register a dissenting opinion on Bessie Smith. It is a lonely, nearly untenable position for she is almost universally acclaimed as the greatest of blue singers. Granted that she sings with warm simplicity and a fervid devotion, to this ear her phrasing and attack have a sameness that makes one or two listenings ample. To the legionary Smith fanciers, these eight recordings will be irresistible.
Recording: Adequate. Surface: Good.

GILBERT MCKEAN.

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THE OTHER SIDE

LONDON.

ON THE occasion of the first appearance of English Decca FFRR discs about a year ago, American collectors immediately began singing fervent critical hosannas. And for good reason. These remarkable recordings possessed the unique combination of optimum acoustic brilliance with true concert-hall spaciousness. We all wondered how they were done. At the time, I envisaged the making of FFRR recordings as an elaborate and precise affair. My imagination conjured up an ultra-modern recording studio festooned with microphones of various shapes and sizes. In this fantasy I saw intent engineers, sitting behind broad glass panels, twiddling away at great banks of dials and meters.

Having just been to several Decca FFRR recording sessions, I hasten to add that my imaginings could not have been wider of the mark. I neglected to take into account the English habit of accomplishing things in an unostentatious, almost improvisatory manner. Kingsway Hall, where the local FFRR orchestral waxings are cut, could hardly be termed a prepossessing auditorium. It was never handsome, even in its nineteenth-century heyday; today, clammy and shabby, it is uninviting as only a neglected theatre can be. But one has merely to hear an orchestra play in the Kingsway to understand why it is the most sought-after recording hall in England. Acoustics are difficult to describe. I could take a stab at it and say that Kingsway Hall combines the virtues of warm mellowness with lively reverberation, but adjectives cannot do it justice. I suspect the braying of a donkey might be made ravishing by its walls.

Pinning down the whys and wherefores of good acoustics is as hard as describing them. Arthur Haddy, Decca's chief engineer, has made his own guesses. He ascribes Kingsway's remarkable qualities to its square shape, wood floor, soft plaster walls, and complete absence of concrete. The orchestra sits in the center of the hall. Three microphones are suspended above them, and once these are properly balanced there is no further manual control. During the course of several recording sessions I never once saw the engineer attempt to monitor a passage.

If my idyllic illusions were shaken by the outward aspect of Kingsway Hall, they were shattered completely by the room in which the recordings were cut. Leaving the hall proper, one stumbles across a maze of wire and enters a dingy little cubicle crammed with equipment. Here, two engineers tend the amplifiers and cutting turntable, while Decca's musical adviser, Victor Olaf, follows the music with a score as it comes over the loudspeakers. Liaison is maintained with the conductor by means of a portable field telephone. Decca FFRR discs are cut with a "dynamic recording head." This utilizes a moving coil, instead of an iron armature, and is said to have much less distortion than the conventional magnetic head. Arthur Haddy, designer of Decca's equipment, has been working on it since 1935.

During the week I spent in London, Decca was recording the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra under Charles Münch. Waxings were made of Beethoven's Eighth Symphony, Mendelssohn's "Reformation" symphony, Prokofiev's "Classical Symphony," and Debussy's "Iberia." If the final pressings approach the test recordings I heard, they will be well worth owning, especially the "Iberia," which should be the definitive version for some time to come. (Other recent Münch recordings include: the César Franck Symphony, a suite by Roussel, Beethoven's First Symphony, Schumann's Fourth, and Fauré's incidental music to "Pelléas et Mélisande.")

Decca has ambitious plans for the future, not the least of which is the inauguration next year of full-length opera recordings at La Scala. Technical improvements are also in the offing. Upon the completion of a new factory, now being built, wax masters will be processed by the "damped silver" method, a superior technique developed by Siemens in Germany. Decca's research department is working now on perfecting a silent surface material. Vinylite is not well thought of here. Decca engineers maintain it cannot reproduce the extended frequency range of their recordings. Take that, America!

ROLAND GELATT.

Roland Gelatt is an American critic and musicologist, now abroad, who will report on European disc activity for RECORDINGS.

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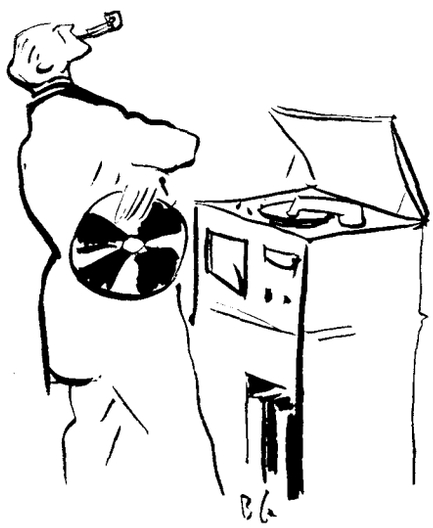
Some Highs and Lows

SINCE the end of the war two developments have focused attention on what is popularly known as "high fidelity." One is the publicizing of improved types of wide-range recording, the other is the expansion of FM (Frequency Modulation) radio, which also offers wider range and more accurate reproduction of sound. Since our radios are usually our phonographs also, the two are closely related. Both broadcast and recorded sounds reach us through the same loud-speaker. Neither of these things is new by any means. What is new is rather the commercial application of improved reproduction and the confusions that always crop up when a development of a technical nature runs into the advertising business and the grapevine hearsay of public curiosity.

What is "high fidelity"? Few simple questions require a more complex answer! High fidelity, to begin with, is a thoroughly misused term; but its original common-sense meaning is perfectly correct — *a relatively high degree of naturalness, of faithfulness to the imagined original sound.* (We never actually hear the original sound.) As could be seen in a previous article (RECORDINGS, Sept. 27), a complete literal realism would require not one but two separate sound channels, one for each ear. Lacking that, all present reproduction is an ingenious illusion of realism.

The illusion of "high fidelity" is the end result of an extraordinary combination of factors that are musical, psychological, and electrical in about equal proportions. There is every reason for argument as to what actually makes for the ultimate illusion of naturalness. To cope with the problems in a professional way one must have virtually a professional training



(or a lifetime's garnered experience) in each of these three fields: music, psychology, and electrical engineering. Few men possess such knowledge and the mind to apply it; hence the problems of creating faithful and natural sounding reproduction are usually worked out through cooperation among specialists of broad outlook who are professionals in one of these fields and highly practical amateurs in the others. It is not often in today's specialized world that such different areas of knowledge must be thrown together in so highly exacting a manner.

Genuine "high fidelity," in its original sense, can be thought of in two broad phases. The first phase, too often unconsidered yet upon which all else depends, is the illusion of reality, of life, movement, immediacy at the *source of the sound*, an illusion (see above) which by clever control of acoustics, of microphone placing, of musical balance can be achieved remarkably well for most types of music or other sound.

Obviously the final sense of naturalness depends too upon the succeeding technical factors in recording and broadcast, as well as the ability of the home machine to deliver the goods. Even so, engrossed as we are in these later problems, we too often forget that the primary job is to feed the microphones a rightly calculated sound. Without this, all the rest is mere electrical accuracy—and the more accurate it is the more convincingly unrealistic may be the result!

This primary phase of "fidelity" accounts for the circumstance, often noticed by discriminating listeners, that innumerable older records (and many standard broadcasts of poor technical fidelity) which do not bring to the ear the highest and lowest tones and may even contain a shocking amount of plain electrical distortion still may sound remarkably realistic and extaordinarily natural. It accounts for the fact that some brand-new records, advertised "high fidelity" (and many a letter-perfect FM broadcast, too) in spite of the finest engineering are anything but faithful, natural-sounding reproductions. It is here that the lesser engineer reaches the end of his rope because he will not see the importance of the psychological-musical side of the illusion he is making. No degree of electrical or mechanical accuracy can make up for a poor illusion of naturalness at the very sound source.

Unfortunately, there can be no exact agreement as to what constitutes the most natural "pickup" of sound for a given type of music or speech. Naturalness even in this limited sense is a matter of association, of tradition, even of prejudice. There is no agreement yet, for example, as to whether opera singers should be recorded at a distance as in the opera house or close at hand. Actual realism being out of the question, there is much to be said for both types of treatment and the decision clearly is not in the province of engineering.

The pieces recorded as nearly as possible under identical circumstances may turn out with strikingly different degrees of naturalness, to the fascination of all concerned. In a more technical sense there are problems such as the piano. It is widely recognized that European piano recording—even the oldest—is more satisfactory to the musical listener than the best we in America have done, regardless of our improved technical standards. Just what the European technique involves is somewhat of a mystery—whether it is a matter of simple mike placement, the acoustics of British recording halls or the vagaries of European weather (this is a potent factor in all recording!); the fact remains that here in some very ancient records we have a type of genuine fidelity that has not been matched in spite of our vaunted "high fidelity."

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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THE YOUNGER SET

AN OLDER generation nurtured on Victor's "Educational" records of the Twenties would feel thoroughly at home, and perhaps a little uncomfortably so, with its successor. Just released in twenty-one albums, amounting to eight-three records, at a total cost of $98.75, it carries the youngster from the first to the sixth grades ($4.75 per album). For this sum, additionally, a school can acquire some excellently informative notes by the planners of the series—Lilla Belle Pitts, of Teacher's College, and Gladys Tipton, of Illinois State Normal—and some thoroughly dull performances of considerable dubious material.

A collection for today's youth which omits in its "listening" program Johann Strauss, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Gilbert and Sullivan—not to mention Gershwin, Kern, and Rodgers—must leave some educators with the feeling of bewilderment that nothing has changed since they listened to these Moszkowski, Poldini, Burgmüller, Iljinsky and Sapelnikoff gems in *their* youth. True, time has marched on with Shostakovitch, Prokofiev, and Korngold, but the scope is still not broad enough to satisfy the interest of youngsters whose radios give them access to more music than the most diligent concert-goers could hear twenty-five years ago. By clinging to the old concepts of a studio orchestra, a conscientious but undistinguished conductor (Ardon Cornwell) and various fourth-flight soloists, Victor has unfortunately perpetuated the idea that education must never enlist the best talents, but only the inexpensive ones.

So far as basic plan is concerned, the series is on firm ground. Six "Rhythm" volumes introduce the youngster to running, skipping, and marching patterns, leading to folk songs and dances. These are followed by six "Listening" volumes, in which familiar songs and brief snatches of classical masterpieces are used to illustrate mood, melody, rhythm, and form. Here the material is mostly good, though the performances are generally second rate. A set of six "Singing" volumes include story and music dramatization for the primary grades. For upper graders, there are folk songs from around the world, cowboy ditties, operatic excerpts, and mixed choruses. One notes, with surprise, the omission of "Pat-a-Pan," the "Wassail" song, and "Twelve Days of Christmas" from the carols. Generally the recording is excellent, though the unbreakable material used for the discs—a good idea—has an amount of surface noise that will be no aid to the teacher already plagued by the wandering attention of her charges. The odd fact is, that despite these complaints and criticisms, Victor gives more comfort to the educator in search of usable material than any other company.

Skipping to the "commercial" side of Victor's youth program, one finds a completely contemporary approach in its choice of Alec Templeton to narrate "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," for which he is also composer and pianist. This addition to the roster of famous artists making children's records is, in the best sense of the word, a "natural"; for he has the sense of make-believe which appeals to a child, and the versatility to carry it out. The graceful music should enhance the appeal of the famous poem, which, to borrow the phrase of the makers, is addressed to those "on the way to twelve years." (Victor Y-360, $2.20, unbreakable.)

As one of the few companies producing music for children without distracting narration, the Young People's Record Club continues to perform a valuable service. Listening to music is no chore when it is Liadov's "Russian Folk Songs," conducted by Max Goberman on Y.P.R.C. No. 409, $1.57. The music is gay, the performance spirited, and the orchestra is well recorded. Also for the upper grades, the Young People's Record Club offers "The Birth of Paul Bunyan," an engaging fantasy told and sung by Tom Glazer. This original version of the legendary Paul's birth is an attractive bit of whimsy, in which the great man gets lost in his boat *Cradle* (Y.P.R.C. 405, $1.57).

For the story hour, there is "Kanki and the Concertina," by Fred Essex and Cyril Baumann. It is a simple, enjoyable tale of a kangaroo who finds a concertina and learns to love it, though he never does master playing it (M.I. 39, $1.75). The narration would have been far more attractive if the speaker had not taken so many parts. Older children will thrill or chill (as the case may be) to Basil Rathbone's impersonation of Fagan in a condensation of Dickens's "Oliver Twist." This fine actor has excellent support in a vivid presentation of the immortal story (Columbia album Set MM, $4.60).

MARIE L. MUTCH.

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HITS AND MISSES

FINE popular songs are so rare these years that the appearance of a single one deserves to be highlighted. Far gone is the ripe musical period of the early Twenties, when any year produced a dozen tunes that are still revived and treasurable; nowadays one is lucky to hear, say, three memorable new numbers in a twelvemonth. Hence it is especially pleasant to call attention to "So Far" by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. These veterans of "Oklahoma!" and "Carousel" have just opened a new musical drama, "Allegro," from which three tunes have already crossed this turntable. "The Gentleman Is a Dope" is a piece of featherweight irony which seems to me of no particular merit, and "A Fellow Needs a Girl" is much too deliberately homely in sentiment for my comfort. But "So Far" is Rodgers at his romantic best, tastefully abetted by Hammerstein II, which means that the song will probably lead a very emotional life indeed.

Its unorthodox, thirty-seven-bar form, with a delayed resolution, will remind you somewhat of Harold Arlen's "Black Magic," and its sentimental toying with the sense of time will suggest Rodgers's and Hart's superb "Where Or When." Unless this department's crystal ball is utterly befogged, "So Far" will be one of the winter's theme songs and will then take its place in the permanent light repertory already so favored by its composers. There is an excellent record of the song by Frank Sinatra (Columbia 37883, 79¢) and another by Perry Como (Victor 20, 79¢).

Few works in the repertory are more moving than certain historic discs, long hard to obtain, by Marlene Dietrich. Six of these sides, made in Europe in the early thirties, are now included in a new album (Vox VSP 304, $3.93). Hollywood's flagrant mistreatment of Dietrich is an old story; with a face and figure and wit which equipped her to be a past-mistress of civilized comedy, she was customarily presented by the lords of Southern California in strange, vampirical roles, as a sort of jet-propelled Theda Bara. Dietrich's European recorders, on the other hand, knew exactly what use to make of her gifts. As if her looks and intelligence were not enough, she is a vocal artist of great subtlety, from the pert to the poignant. The Vox company deserves strafing for not including a translation of her German, but she is so expressive that it is really not necessary to know the tongue—this reviewer doesn't—to relish the pathos and delicate lubricity of her two most famous songs, "Jonny" and "Peter." The other numbers in the album may also be highly recommended, especially "Ja, So Bin Ich," a lingering plaint by Robert Stolz, and the disenchanted "Wo Ist der Mann?"

This last includes a particularly wonderful example of that awkward, wailing perversion of hot jazz which was characteristic of pre-Hitlerian Germany (English adaptations of the real Afro-American stuff were on the genteel side, French on the purple, and Japanese on the literal). Indeed, Dietrich's intensely feminine artistry, which imparts an almost Gallic lightness to her melancholy Teutonic material, is only one of the striking attractions of this album. Suffusing all these sides, through the accompaniments of Peter Kreuder's band, is the tone of history, the foreboding tone of a German republic going, most self-consciously, to its death, seizing most naturally as it goes on that strange American jazz which could so easily be distorted into expressions of the hectic and the macabre. In the context of the year 1947, the sound of Kreuder's morbid jazz, behind Dietrich's voice, is at least as arresting as that voice itself. Only superficially will this seem light music.

The American jazz which the Germans perverted sprang, of course, from quite different emotional sources—the triumph of the American Negro over his environment. The spirit of much genuine hot jazz is that of yea-saying, of hallelujah. And even the blues usually announce not a defeat but a state of endurance or resolution (their typical tonality is major, not minor). Often, indeed, they are vehicles of comedy. An irresistible case in point is a version of the great "St. Louis Blues" by Pearl Bailey (Columbia 37570, 79¢). A superbly easy singer, loaded with reserve power, she utterly ignores the conventional treatment of the song and takes it at a rapid tempo, with a marvelously funny and candid divagation on the subject of recent events in the boudoir. Nothing farther from the menacing dolors of German jazz could possibly be imagined.

WILDER HOBSON.

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Recordings *Reports on Current Pop Releases*

PERFORMER, SONG, DATA	REPORT
Basie, Count: "South," "I'm Drownin' in Your Deep Blue Eyes" V-20-2346, 63¢	Least distinguished Basie in along while, with "South" dragging and "Blue Eyes" very sleepy. Basie on a label should mean more than it does here.
Cantor, Eddie: "If You Knew Susie," "Margie" C-Archive Series No. 2 89¢	Notice is served. The nostalgic will find themselves hard put to be nostalgic about this.
Clark, Buddy: "Freedom Train," "Sincerely Yours" C-37889, 79¢	Irving Berlin's contribution to the admirable railroad event. Patriotism strong, musical value weak. Clark does robust job.
Craig, Francis: "Near You" Bullet 1001, 60¢	The incredible best seller (see p. 67). A reasonably attractive tune played in a way to suggest that, unlike vaudeville, the pianola is not dead.
Dorsey, Tommy: "L-L-L-A," V-20-2468, 79¢	The great trombonist and his troupe salute Los Angeles with the commercial drivel appropriate to it. San Francisco papers please copy.
Goodman, Benny: "Let's Dance" V-album P 188, $3.60	Reissues of some great performances by Benny in his salad days—evergreens such as "Sometimes I'm Happy," "King Porter," "I've Found a New Baby," and "Roll 'Em," also "Madhouse," "Afraid to Dream," "Changes," and the old radio sign-off "Good-bye." Wonderful execution by a truly all-star band. Too bad the recording isn't better.
Herman, Woody: "Boulevard of Memories," "Civilization" C-37885, 79¢	A Rimsky-Korsakoff inspired ballad and a Calypso-like novelty. Woody is a better balladeer here, than a Calypso singer.
Hodges, Johnny: "Jeep's Blues," "Rendezvous with Rhythm" C-37837, 79¢	Savory Hodges reissued from the old Okeh list.
Holiday, Billie: "Them There Eyes," "Body and Soul" C-37836, 79¢	The 1939 Holiday, in great form, and handsomely supported by such men as Charlie Shavers, Tab Smith, Roy Eldridge, Lawrence Lucie, and Eddie Dougherty. Robust singing, excellent recording.
Kay, Beatrice: "Mention My Name in Sheboygan" C-37922, 79¢	Expert horsing of the old razzmatazz style by an expert horsewoman.
Lutcher, Nellie: "You Better Watch Yourself, Bub," "My Mother's Eyes" Cap-4042, 63¢	More vocal vigor from La Lutcher, who has made a sensation via records alone. Worth hearing if only to say if she "takes" with you.
Malneck, Matty: "Shangri-La" C-37877, 79¢	A "Warsaw Concerto" kind of thing, or more accurately, a "Park Avenue Fantasy" kind of thing since Malneck also wrote the latter. A vest-pocket rhapsody, with Robert Maxwell riding out solidly on the harp.
Mercer, Johnny: "Harmony," "Save the Bones for Henry Jones" Cap-15000, 79¢	Mercer with the King Cole Trio, a happy combination for the humorous tunes employed. Good spirits throughout, and more than a little good music.
Shore, Dinah: "Lazy Countryside," "That's All I Want to Know" C-37884, 79¢	"It's So Peaceful in the Lazy Countryside" is a proper genealogy for this "Fun and Fancy Free" tune, well sung by its film proprietor, Miss Shore. Notably good recording.
Sinatra, Frank: "Got a Home in that Rock," "Jesus is a Rock in the Weary Land" C-37853, 79¢	Sinatra sings out strongly on these spirituals with the Charioteers, though their ease is an odd contrast with his effort. Interesting sociology, unnotable music.
Sullivan, Maxine: "Loch Lomond," "I'm Comin' Virginia" C-37818, 79¢	The famous original performance of the swung "Loch Lomond," beautifully sung by Maxine Sullivan in this reissue. Superb backgrounds by the likes of Frankie Newton, Buster Bailey, Pete Brown, Claude Thornehill, John Kirby, and O'Neil & Spencer.
Vaughan, Sarah: "I Cover the Waterfront," "I Don't Stand a Ghost of a Chance" M-503, 79¢	Tasteful Vaughan, after a few sides in which her technic dominated everything else. Musicianly versions of these perennials.
Williams, Cootie: "Echoes of Harlem," "Sweet Lorraine" Majestic 1171, 79¢	Far from the best version by Cootie of the famous Ellington piece. "Sweet Lorraine" is tasteful but drab.

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OVERDUE RECORD

(*Continued from page 49*)

before borrowing or to listen to the discs which we cannot permit to leave the library. A number of public libraries with record collections have sound-proof listening room; but our present space is too limited for such accommodations, and we shall have to wait for the construction of the Cincinnati Public Library's new building before we may have them. In the meantime, we have to content ourselves with record players equipped with crystal earphones. Acoustically these leave a good deal to be desired, and sometimes they produce a distracting hissing sound.

Although we have not yet had an opportunity to conduct a formal survey, we estimate that six or seven times as many men borrow our records as do women. Most of the men are young. We can only speculate as to the reasons for this. Perhaps men have more leisure time than women, who must keep house and tend to the children. Perhaps albums of recordings are too bulky and heavy for some women to carry home. Perhaps more men than women are in the neighborhood of the library during the hours it is open. Perhaps they just like music more.

We have been able to discover which of our recordings are most popular with the borrowing community. Six albums are the leaders: Tchaikowsky's "Symphony No. 5" (Victor DM 253); Beethoven's "Symphony No. 9" (Columbia MM 591); "A Treasury of Grand Opera" (Victor M 1074); Rimsky-Korsakov's "Scheherazade" (Columbia MM 398); Gilbert and Sullivan's "H. M. S. Pinafore" (Victor DC 13); Rodgers's and Hart's "Carousel" (Decca DA 400). The public quite clearly prefers music on records—and so most of our collection is music.

Librarians often find that many of their patrons like some of the books they borrow so well that they order copies of their own from the bookstores. We have had similar experiences. Many men and women visit our collection to browse and to borrow before purchasing recordings from the local stores. In this way our activities are reciprocal.

We are constantly discovering unexpected ways in which music on records may be of service to the community. A day camp for children was having difficulty in calming its charges for their noonday nap. The counselors asked us to help them find recorded lullabies that would really lull. According to a tabulation made by the counselors, Wagner's "Träume" (Columbia 71469-D) and Chopin's "Berceuse in D-flat major" (Victor 15382-A) had the most soothing effect.

Students in a class in radio production needed background music for a script on atomic power. After listening to many records in our collection, they concluded that Stravinsky was the ideal atomic composer and "Sacre du Printemps" particularly congenial to fissionable material.

Of the more than 7,500 public libraries in the United States today, comparatively few have audio-visual services. Many are prevented from developing them for budgetary reasons or for lack of space. A few are real veterans in the field, having been active for twenty years or longer. The magnificent collection of the New York Public Library at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street, was started many years ago. It has been acquired almost entirely through gifts, but is available for reference only. Since 1921 the Detroit Public Library has circulated recordings on a rental basis from its music and drama department. The collection, which has grown steadily in resources and services, is to be absorbed in the recently created Audio-Visual Division. The public library of Springfield, Mass., has been lending records since 1923.

The majority of public libraries which have record collections allow their discs to circulate, and most lend them without charge. Usually the public library is the only place in the community where records may be borrowed, free or for fee. The Hartford Public Library, with a collection of 40,000 discs, has a free service; so have Chicago, Elizabeth, and Newark, N. J., Quincy, Mass., Seattle, Akron, Charlotte, N. C., Milwaukee, Grand Rapids, Indianapolis, and Ventura, Calif. Among the libraries which charge a small lending fee are Brooklyn, Detroit, Syracuse, and Baltimore. Libraries whose discs may be listened to only on equipment in the record room include those in Beaumont, Tex., Cleveland, the 58th Street building of the New York Public Library, and the Queens Borough branch of the same library.

This brief summary of record services in public libraries undoubtedly has neglected many institutions which are pioneering in this still young field. But at least it has pointed out a few straws in the wind, indications of the new ways in which libraries are attempting to serve their communities.

Karline Brown is director of the Record and Film Center of the Cincinnati Public Library.

Letters to the *Recordings* Editor

Long-Time Believer

SIR: As a regular reader of the *SRL* I feel that I have been awarded a very substantial bonus by the addition of your section. After all, records are just one phase of the publishing business to which we are indebted for a wide distribution of products which otherwise would be inaccessible to most of us. My special reason for writing you is to endorse as strongly as I know how the sentiments of your editorial on the copyright situation. Your clear statement should help hasten the realization of a fair solution of this problem. I have never seen it so well stated.

GEORGE E. JUDD.
Boston, Mass.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Reader Judd is manager of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, whose Victor records are played on countless broadcasts each year, with no revenue to the organization which made them.*

Company, Write!

SIR: The point raised in Impressions [RECORDINGS Sept. 27] is well taken. But while all credit is due John Hammond for his forward step in giving technicians credit in album texts, the step is not as revolutionary as your article would imply. May I call your attention to the liner copy of RCA-Victor's current release of the Bach "B Minor Mass." You will note in very bold type directly below the featured artists the names of Julius Herford, music consultant; Richard Gilbert, recording director, and Lewis W. Layton, recording engineer. Similar printed credits appeared in the RCA Victor Recordrama of "Duel in the Sun."

ALAN KAYES,
Publicity Manager,
RCA-Victor Record Department.
New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *We are delighted that Victor endorses the point noted in Impressions for October, though the album, and liner, of the "B minor Mass" were not in hand when the records were reviewed. As for the earlier "Duel in the Sun" mentioned by Mr. Kayes, it is quite another order of thing. Moreover, as well as mentioning the mere name of the technical personnel, the "Keynote" album of Stravinsky located the studio employed, the characteristics of the recording, and the date on which the job was done. If RCA-Victor will document its issues thus—and others follow suit—*RECORDINGS *(and record enthusiasts) will cry Hallalujah!*

A bás, Bepop

SIR: Bepop is not left wing: not unless you can call frantic imitations of Raymond Scott and Stuff Smith of fifteen years ago with Debussy overtones "left wing." "Left wings" are distinguished by their independence, not on their borrowings from, and leanings toward, other fields.

SOL BABITZ.
Los Angeles, Calif.

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Records Over the Nation

A Dealer Survey of Top Record Sellers

City and Store	*Popular Singles*	*Popular Albums*	*Classical Singles*	*Classical Albums*
BIRMINGHAM, ALA. (*Stairway to Music, Inc.*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Bachianas Brasilieras (No. 5) (C)	Rhapsody in Blue (C)
BOSTON (*Boston Music Co.*)	Near You (B)	Oklahoma (D)	Jalousie (V)	Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 2 (V)
(*C. W. Homeyer*)	Near You (B)	Lombardo Land (D)	Warsaw Concerto (V)	"Wozzeck" (Janssen)
CHICAGO (*Hudson-Ross, Inc.*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Jalousie (V)	Scheherezade (C)
CINCINNATI (*Steinberg's Inc.*)	Near You (B)	Three Suns (V)	Clair de Lune (V)	Wagner Program (V)
DALLAS (*The Record Shop*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Paganini Var. (V)	Liszt Concerto (V)
(*A. Harris and Co.*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Clair de Lune (V)	Liszt Concerto No. 1 (V)
DETROIT (*Doubleday Shop*)	Near You (B)	Jolson Album (D)	Rosenkavalier Waltzes (C)	Gayne Ballet (C)
(*Grinnell Bros.*)	Near You (B)	Laine Album (Mer)	Ave Maria (C)	Gayne Ballet (C)
KANSAS CITY, MO. (*Jenkins Music Co.*)	Near You (B)	Jolson Album (D)	Clair de Lune (V)	Rachmaninoff No. 2 (V)
LOS ANGELES (*Birkel-Richardson*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Du bist die Ruh' (V)	Les Sylphides (V)
(*G. Schirmer Co.*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Paganini Var. (V)	Gayne Ballet (C)
MEMPHIS (*Mallory Chamberlain*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Clair de Lune (V)	Chausson Symphony (V)
NEW YORK (*Doubleday Shop*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Jalousie (V)	Mozart Concerto No. 15 (ED)
(*Dynamic*)	Near You (B)	Jolson Album (D)	Kol Nidre (V)	Beethoven Concerto No. 2 (V)
(*Haynes-Griffin*)	Whiffenpoof (D)	Whiting Album (Cap)	Waltz of the Spheres (C)	Wagner Program (V)
(*Heins and Bolet*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Clair de Lune	Mozart Horn Concerto (C)
(*Rabson's*)	Hurry On Down (Cap)	Prom Date (V)	Concerto Grosso (K)	Shostakovitch 7th (M)
OMAHA (*Lyon and Healy, Inc.*)	Smoke Smoke Smoke (Cap.)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Paganini Var. (V)	Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 2 (V)
PHILADELPHIA (*H. Royer Smith*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Kol Nidre (V)	Mozart Concerto No. 15 (ED)
PORTLAND, ORE. (*Sherman Clay Music Co.*)	I Wish I Didn't Love You So (V)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Polonaise (V)	Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 2 (V)
SAN FRANCISCO (*Sherman Clay and Co.*)	Near You (B)	Park Ave. Hillbillie (C)	Un bel di (C)	Traviata (C)

Key: B—Bullet C—Columbia Cap.—Capitol D—Decca ED—English Decca K—Keynote Mer.—Mercury V—Victor

Leaders: Two issues dominate the popular field: the Bullet recording of "Near You," reported by seventeen of twenty-two stores as their best-selling single record, and Dorothy Shay's "Park Ave. Hillbillie," the best selling popular album in thirteen stores. As in the month preceding, Jose Iturbi's recording of "Clair de Lune" is the best-selling record in the classical field, with five stores; and the second piano concerto of Rachmaninoff the leader among classical albums in four stores.

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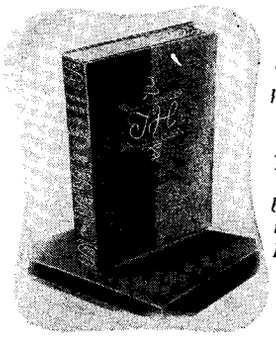

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